



Geronimo Stilton

A CHEESE-COLORED CAMPER

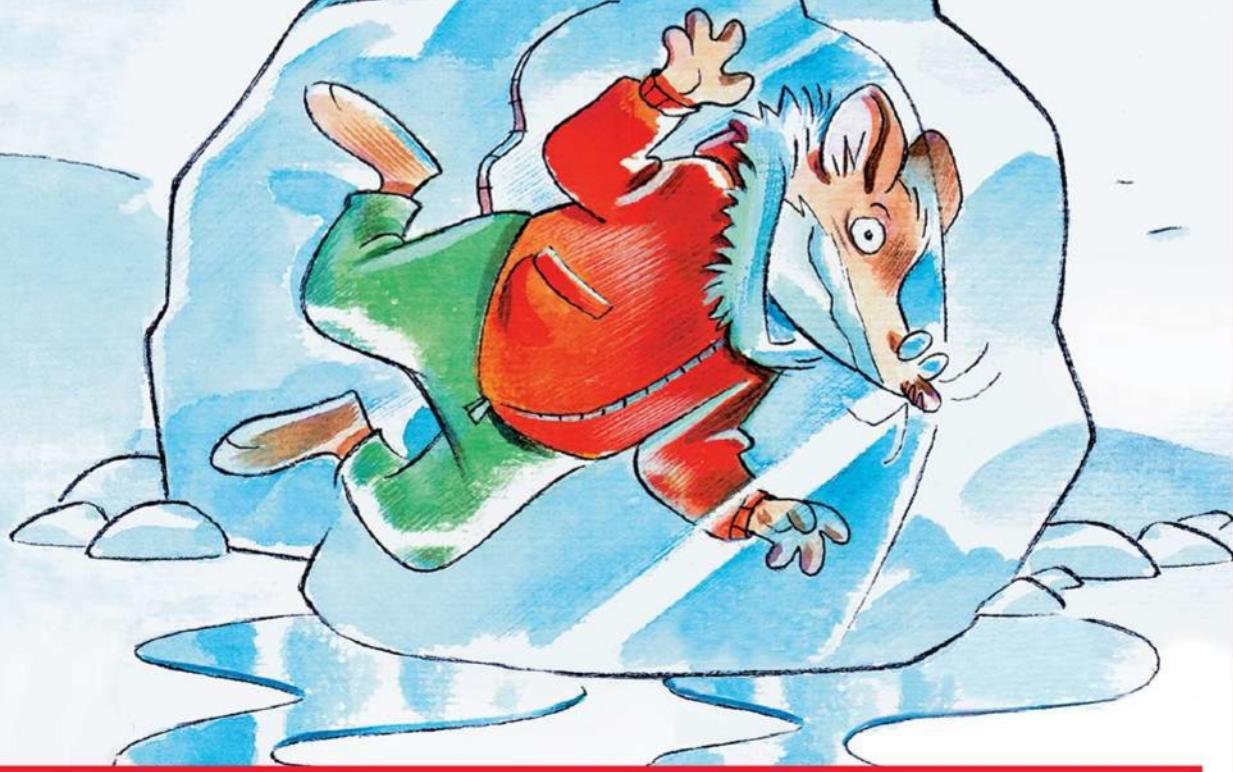


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A CHEESE-COLORED CAMPER



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Dear mouse friends,
Welcome to the world of

Geronimo Stilton





THE RODENT'S GAZETTE

EDITORIAL STAFF





Geronimo Stilton
A learned and brainy
mouse; editor of
The Rodent's Gazette



Thea Stilton
Geronimo's sister and
special correspondent at
The Rodent's Gazette



Trap Stilton
An awful joker;
Geronimo's cousin and
owner of the store
Cheap Junk for Less



Benjamin Stilton
A sweet and loving
nine-year-old mouse;
Geronimo's favorite
nephew

Geronimo Stilton

A CHEESE-COLORED CAMPER



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www.geronimostilton.com

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MR. STILTON, WAIT!

One morning, I was in a **fabumouse** mood. I woke up before my alarm clock went off.

I made myself a delicious cheesy good **breakfast**. And I got a seat on the **subway**. Not an easy thing to do in crowded New Mouse City!

I was humming a happy **tune** when I reached my office.

Just then, my secretary came racing up to me. “Mr. Stilton, **wait!**” she squeaked. “Don’t open that door!”

But I had already turned the knob. How **strange**. Someone was sitting at my desk.



GRANDFATHER WILLIAM SHORTPAWS

He was a **large** mouse with silver fur and shiny steel glasses. He was holding **my** phone in one paw. The other paw flipped through **my** desk calendar. He looked so **comfortable** in **my** chair, you'd think he owned the place. And, well, he did.

You see, the mouse was **my** grandfather. **GRANDFATHER WILLIAM SHORTPAWS.** He was the founder of the company.

Oops. I completely forgot to introduce myself. My name is *Stilton, Geronimo Stilton*. I am a publisher. I run





the most popular newspaper in New Mouse City. It's called the *The Rodent's Gazette*.

But where was I? Oh, yes, I was staring at my grandfather. "Hello, Grandfather," I squeaked. "How are you?"





THREE, I SAID THREEEE!

“**HOW DO YOU THINK?**” roared Grandfather William. “**I'M BUSY
VERY BUSY, THAT'S HOW I AM!**”

I gulped. Can you believe I am **afraid** of my own grandfather? But I don't let it get to me. You see, everyone is afraid of Grandfather William. He is one tough, no-nonsense mouse. Once he made a ten-pound rat cry just by glaring at him.

Now he was **SCREAMING** into my phone. I felt sorry for the poor mouse on the other end.

“Yes, three!” he shrieked. “I need **3** million guidebooks to Ratzikistan on the double! I said, Three! Three! *Threeee!*”



Grandfather William Shortpaws



T as in Try harder!

H as in Hop to it!

R as in Right away!

E as in Exactly what I said!

E as in End of discussion!"

He snickered. Then he slammed down the phone.

I chewed my whiskers. “**Un**, what are you doing here, Grandfather?” I asked in a faint voice. “And why do you want to print three million guidebooks to Ratzikistan?”

As usual, Grandfather ignored me. He is the worst listener. Instead, he began scribbling away on **my** notepad.

Just then, **my** secretary, Mousella MacMouser, came in. She handed Grandfather a stack of papers. He leafed through them, grumbling. “**These are all wrong!**” he snorted. “Wrong, wrong, wrong!” He tore up the



papers and crumpled them into a ball. Then he **jumped** onto **my** desk. He struck a pose just like a professional **basketball** mouse. “**SCORE!**” he squeaked, shooting the ball into my wastepaper basket.

My secretary and I looked at each other in shock.

“The business is a mess, Geronimo!” he snorted. “You need to publish some bestsellers now or you can say bye-bye to your books forever!”

I had no idea what Granddad was squeaking about. The company was doing **GREAT**. The newspaper was selling like cheese Popsicles in the summertime. And our books always sold well. Yes, we hadn’t had a bestseller in a few months, but we were still making **tons** of money.



Of course, Grandfather William wouldn't listen. "Don't tell **me** how we're doing!" he shrieked. "I built this company with my bare paws! I know everything!"

I Know everything! Uh-oh. This was going to be a lot harder than I thought. Once Grandfather gets an idea in his head, it sticks like a mouse in a glue trap. He's like the safe at the Regal Rodent Bank. A tough one to crack.

I tried reasoning with him. "Um, but, Grandfather," I began in a gentle voice. "**20** years ago, you left running the company to me. Isn't this my job?"

Can you guess his reply? Naturally, he didn't say a **word**. I told you my grandfather never listens.

He was staring at my calendar. "Look at



all these appointments!” he **squeaked**. “I’m going to be busier than a ratburglar in the middle of a blackout.”

“But, Grandfather!” I complained. “Those are **my** appointments!”

At that very moment, the phone rang. We both leaped for it. Unfortunately, the old mouse **beat** me to it.



THREE, I



SAID THREEEEE!

“No, this is not Geronimo Stilton,” he thundered. “I am his grandfather. And from today on, I am the one in charge.



*The head honcho
The boss. The big cheese.*

Got it?” He slammed down the phone.

I was horrified. What would my clients think? Maybe Grandfather was right. The business was a **mess**. And it was all because of him!



NOT EVEN PENGUINS . . .

Right then, I remembered about the guidebooks. “Grandfather, can you at least tell me about these guidebooks to Ratzikistan?” I asked. “I just don’t **understand**.”

Grandfather William shook his head. “Poor Geronimo,” he scoffed. “Of course **you don’t understand**. Can you help it if your brain is so small? So teeny-weeny? So microscopic? Not everyone can be a **genius** like me.”

By now, I was ready to **STRANGLE** him. But how could I? I could just see the headlines in the paper the next day: YOUNG PUBLISHER MURDERS FEEBLE OLD GRANDFATHER! STILTON SNUFFS OUT INNOCENT LIFE! No, I couldn’t do



it. After all, I'm a newspaper mouse. I hate bad press.

3 Instead, I tried again. "Are you really going to print three million copies?" I asked.

For once, Grandfather William seemed to hear me. He rolled his eyes. "Wake up, Geronimo! Wake up! **WAKE UUUUUUP!**" he shouted in my ear. Then he **WAVED** a map under my snout.

"What's that?" I mumbled, taken by surprise. He sneered and shoved the map at me again. This time I could see it clearly. It was a map of Ratzikistan.

"Have you ever noticed that there are no guidebooks to Ratzikistan?" Grandfather **demanded**.

I opened my mouth to reply, but he was already babbling on.

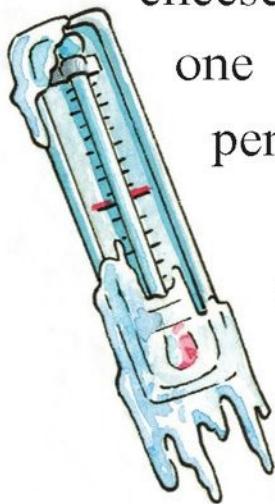
"Ah, Ratzikistan," Grandfather said with



a **sigh**. “A place no one has ever heard of before. Just think of all of the guidebooks we can sell!” He clapped his paws. “Sometimes I am so smart, I scare myself!” he chuckled.

I was stunned. Had Grandfather William’s cheese finally slipped off his cracker? No one goes to Ratzikistan. **Not even penguins.**

“But, Grandfather,” I began. “There are no guidebooks to Ratzikistan because the temperature there is **forty degrees below zero!**”





MY SWEET LITTLE CHEESE CURL!

Suddenly, the office door flew open. In marched my sister, **Thea**. She is *The Rodent's Gazette's Special correspondent*. Have you met her? You would remember Thea.

*She's one of a kind.
Kind of a nut, that is.*

"Grandpa, dear Grandpa!" my sister squeaked. She threw herself into Grandfather's open paws.

Immediately, his eyes filled with tears. "Thea, my beloved granddaughter! My sweet little **cheese curl**! More precious than my wallet! More beautiful than Miss Mouse Island!" he cried.

Thea smiled *sweetly*. "See your



sister, here, Geronimo?” my grandfather added **proudly**. “Now, this is one smart rodent!”

Can you tell Thea is Grandfather William’s favorite? He sends her on all of these wonderful assignments. In fact, **SHE HAD JUST RETURNED FROM A TRIP TO THE SOUTHERN ISLANDS.** She was researching the latest trends in swimwear. Tough job, I’m sure.

“Well, it seems this year it’s all about **color!**” Thea announced.





"Orange, red, yellow, green! You name it, they're wearing it!"

Grandfather beamed. "Brilliant! I'm so proud of you, darling!" he gushed.

I tried not to act **jealous**. But I was. I cleared my throat. "Um, I would love to go to the Southern Islands sometime, too," I offered **timidly**.





Grandfather William shot me a **disapproving** look. “**Forget it**, Geronimo,” he squeaked. “Only a stunning mouse like Thea can report on fashion. She’s **got style**. Too bad I can’t say the same about you.”



I chewed my whiskers to keep from squeaking. What was wrong with the way I dressed? OK, so maybe I was a little on the **conservative** side. I wasn’t into **flashy** colors or **crazy** prints. But no one had ever picked on my clothes before.

MY SWEET LITTLE



CHEESE CURL!

Grandfather turned to *Thea*. “How was the flight, darling?” he asked. “I hope your first-class seat was comfortable. Nothing but the best for my little *treasure*.”

Did I mention Thea is Grandfather’s favorite?

Thea’s got style.





TINA SPICYTAIL

Right then, the phone **rang**. I pressed the speaker **BUTTON** so we could all listen. | ”

“**Heeeeello!** **Heeeeeeellooooo!**”

squeaked the female voice at the other end. I recognized it right away. It was **Tina Spicytail**, Grandfather’s housekeeper.

“**Mr.** Geronimo, would you please ask **Mr.** Shortpaws what he would like for dinner?” she yelled. Tina was not a quiet mouse.

Grandfather William scratched his head. “Let’s see, I’d like a **cheddar fondue . . .**” he began.

But Tina quickly interrupted him. “No fondue for you, **Mr. Shortpaws!**” she





shrieked. “You’re on a **diet!** By the way, are you wearing your woolen underwear? You’re not so young anymore, you know! Don’t come crying to me if you catch a **TERRIBLE COLD!**”

Grandfather rolled his eyes. He started to reply, but she cut him off again.

“Before I forget, I’m packing your suitcases for your trip,” she announced. “I must have packed forty at least. I had a little trouble with your **antique** desk, though. But don’t worry, I just chopped it up into **pieces**. You can put it together when you arrive at your destination.”

Steam poured out of Grandfather William’s ears. His eyes popped open wide.

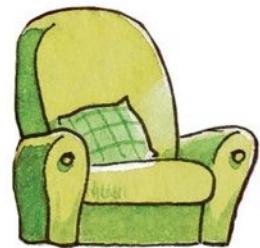
“**WHAT?!**” he thundered. “Do you mean **YOU CHOPPED UP MY PRECIOUS ANTIQUE DESK** with the imported ivory knobs?”



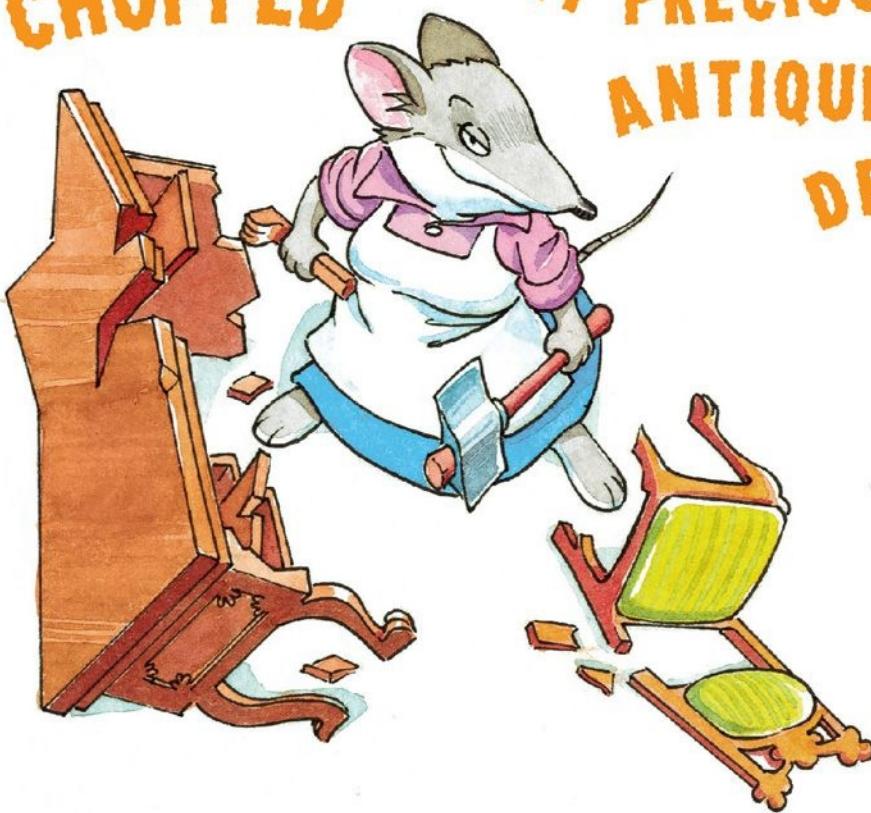
Uh-oh. I had a feeling Grandfather wasn't going to like the answer to that question.

"YOU GOT IT!" Tina confirmed proudly. She went on to explain that she had also included his favorite armchair.

It was chopped into pieces like the desk. "I am all ready to leave. I will be there in a couple of minutes!" she finished.



YOU CHOPPED UP MY PRECIOUS ANTIQUE DESK?!





A dial tone filled the room. And an alarm bell **went off** inside my head. Grandfather was leaving? Where to? And why?

Just then, he turned to me. “Better get packing, Geronimo,” he said. “You know how slow you are. You don’t want to make us late.”

I had no idea what he was talking about. **I wasn’t planning on going anywhere.**

Grandfather William shook his head. “Oops, didn’t we tell you?” he said.

Thea raised her eyebrows. “Oops, didn’t we tell you?” she echoed.

Right then, my cousin Trap strode into the room. He was wearing a huge backpack.

“OOPS, DIDN’T WE TELL YOU?” he squeaked.

The door flew open again. This time, Tina marched in. She was pushing an



enormouse trunk on wheels. She looked at everyone staring at me.

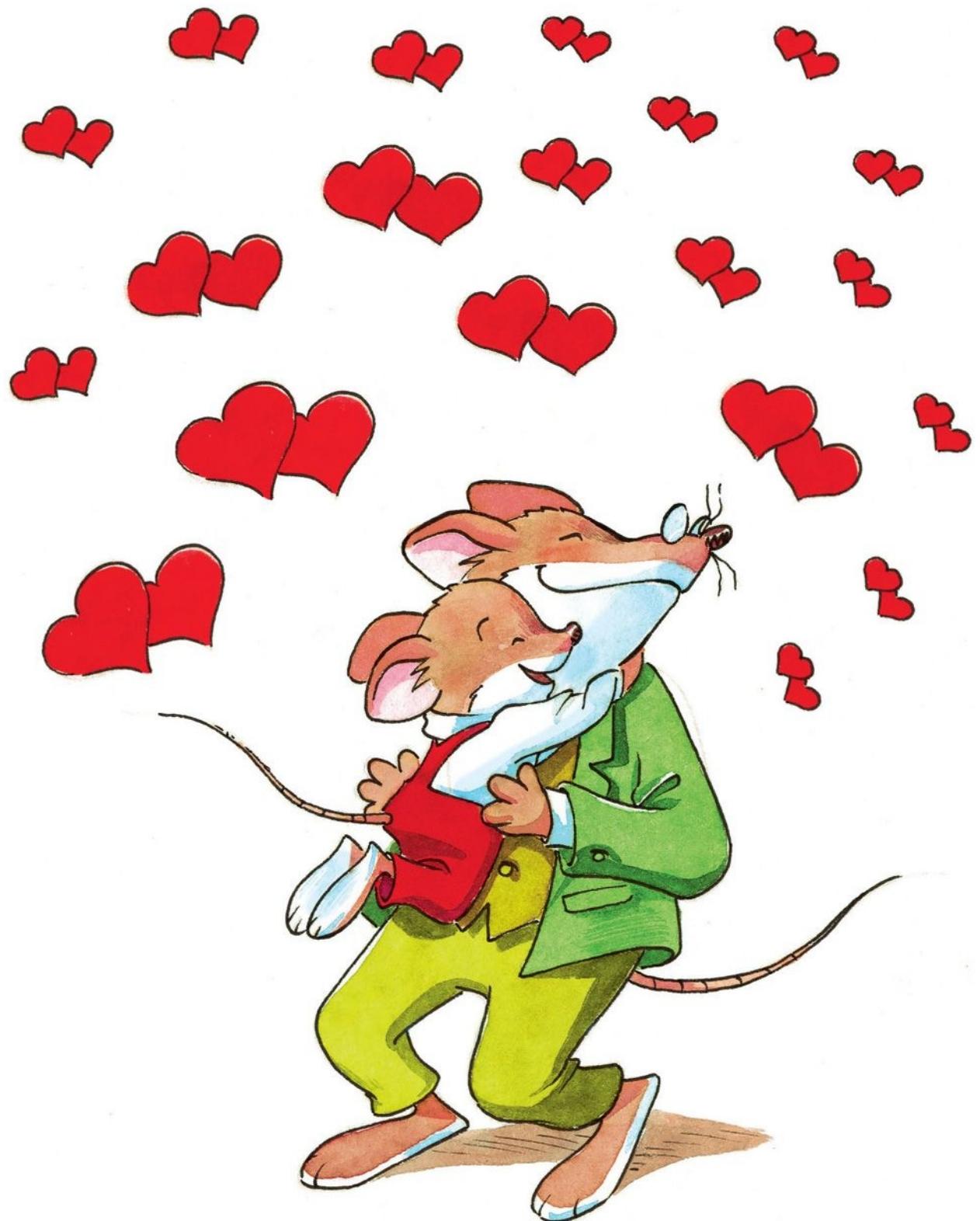
“Didn’t you tell him?” she shouted.

I bit my tail in a fit of **RAGE**. “Tell me what? What didn’t you tell me?” I screamed.

At that moment, my favorite nephew, Benjamin, raced through the door and **hugged** me.

“Uncle Geronimo! I am so **happy**!” he cried. “They just told me that you are coming with us to

Ratzikistan!”



*My favorite nephew, Benjamin, raced
through the door and hugged me.*



RATZIKISTAN, HERE WE COME!

I was flabbergasted. “**what?** We are leaving for Ratzikistan? Why didn’t anyone tell me?” I shouted.

No one squeaked. What could they say? They knew they were wrong.

Instead, Thea shoved a chocolate **Cheesy Chew** into my mouth. “Don’t get your tail in a twist,” she soothed in a **honey-sweet voice**.

I was still fuming. But I must admit, I do love those **Cheesy Chews**. There’s nothing like a yummy piece of chocolate to **PERK** me up. Still, I wasn’t giving in so easily. I was tired of being overlooked. “I will not be ignored!” I spluttered with my mouth full.



Trap **rolled his eyes**. “You’re such a drama queen, Germeister,” **he chuckled**. He glanced at his watch. “Better shake a paw, Cuz. You have exactly seventeen and a half minutes to pull yourself together, pack your suitcases, and put on the alarm system before we’re off!” he added. Then he pinched my cheek, causing the Cheesy Chew to go down the wrong pipe.

“Argh! Argh!” I gagged.

Grandfather clapped a paw on my back. The candy flew across the room.

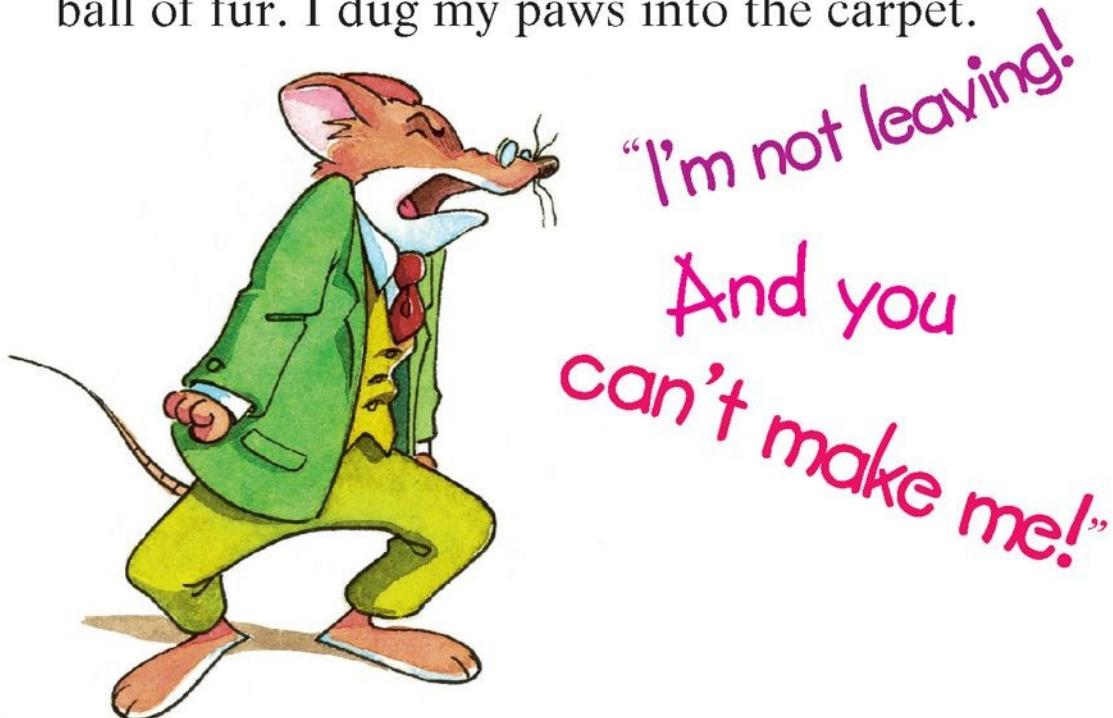
“My dear grandson, quit complaining. We’d never ignore you!” he insisted. “Now stop **dillydallying** and close your suitcases.”

I gnashed my teeth together. I took a deep breath. Then I explained in a very small voice why I couldn’t close my suitcases. I didn’t have any!



“Even better!” Grandfather William concluded. “Then you can leave without them! Let’s go! Call a **TAXI** !”

By now, I was beyond mad. I was a raging ball of fur. I dug my paws into the carpet.



I squeaked. Yes, I sounded just like a five-year-old mouslet. But I didn’t care.

Grandfather William **STARED** at me for a moment. Then he told everyone to leave the room.



“I need to be alone with my dear grandson,” he exclaimed.

As soon as they left, Granddad slumped against me. Then he **limped** over to my chair. *Since when did he have a limp?* I wondered.

“Ah, Grandson, getting old is such a horrible thing. You are so lucky to be young and strong,” he said in a feeble voice.

I blinked. I had never thought about Grandfather William being old before. He was so loud. And tough. And, well, obnoxious.



“Are you OK, Granddad?” I asked, feeling **guilty**.

He shook his head. “I’m not feeling well. I have a pain right here, near my heart,” he said, pointing at his breast pocket.

I raised my eyebrows. “But, Grandfather,



that's your wallet," I pointed out.

He shrugged. "Ah, yes. My heart, my wallet, same thing," he added.

I wasn't surprised. Grandfather loves money more than **cheese**. He's the cheapest mouse I know. He once shaved off all of his fur to save money on shampoo and conditioner. That's why they call him Cheap Mouse Willy.

Now he stroked his fur, looking sad. "It kills me to see our family arguing," he mumbled. "I am so hurt that **you** don't want to come with **us**."

He **sighed**. Then his eyes filled with tears. I didn't know what to say. I didn't want to leave. But I had never seen Grandfather so broken up.

"Say you are coming with us, **dear grandson!**" he cried, grabbing my paw.



“Please say yes! Do it for me. I have given you **S O M U C H** and I ask for so little.”

By now, he was *sobbing* away full force. I had never seen so many tears come out of one rodent before. He would have come in handy when my aunt Sweetfur’s mouse hole went up in flames.

At last, I couldn’t stand his sobs any longer. “OK, OK. I’ll come,” I muttered.

At that very moment, the unthinkable happened. Grandfather William *leaped back* to his feet. It was a *miracle*! It was as if he were suddenly thirty years younger.

“Well, then, let’s hit the road!” he shrieked. “The **taxi** is here!”

He flung open the office door. Thea, Trap, and Benjamin *fell* on top of one another. Their ears had been pressed to the door.



“Wait, **Grandfather**!” I called.
But he was already halfway down the hall.
“Move your tail, *you spineless fool!*”
he shouted back at me.





GRANDFATHER'S SUPERCAMPER

I couldn't believe it. My own grandfather had set me up. I thought he really was sick. Even worse, I thought he was heartsick. Now I knew he was just nuts. Nuts enough to pull a low-down prank on me.

Rotten rats' breath! I was in a sour mood. Anyone who knows me knows that **I HATE TRAVELING!**

My grandfather, on the other hand, was **bursting** with excitement.

“Isn’t traveling great?” he squeaked happily. “In my next life, I think I will be an **explorer**. I will soar above the clouds in my own private jet. Sail the high seas in my yacht. And, of course, I will hit the road in my



fabumouse cheese-colored camper."

LET's GO!



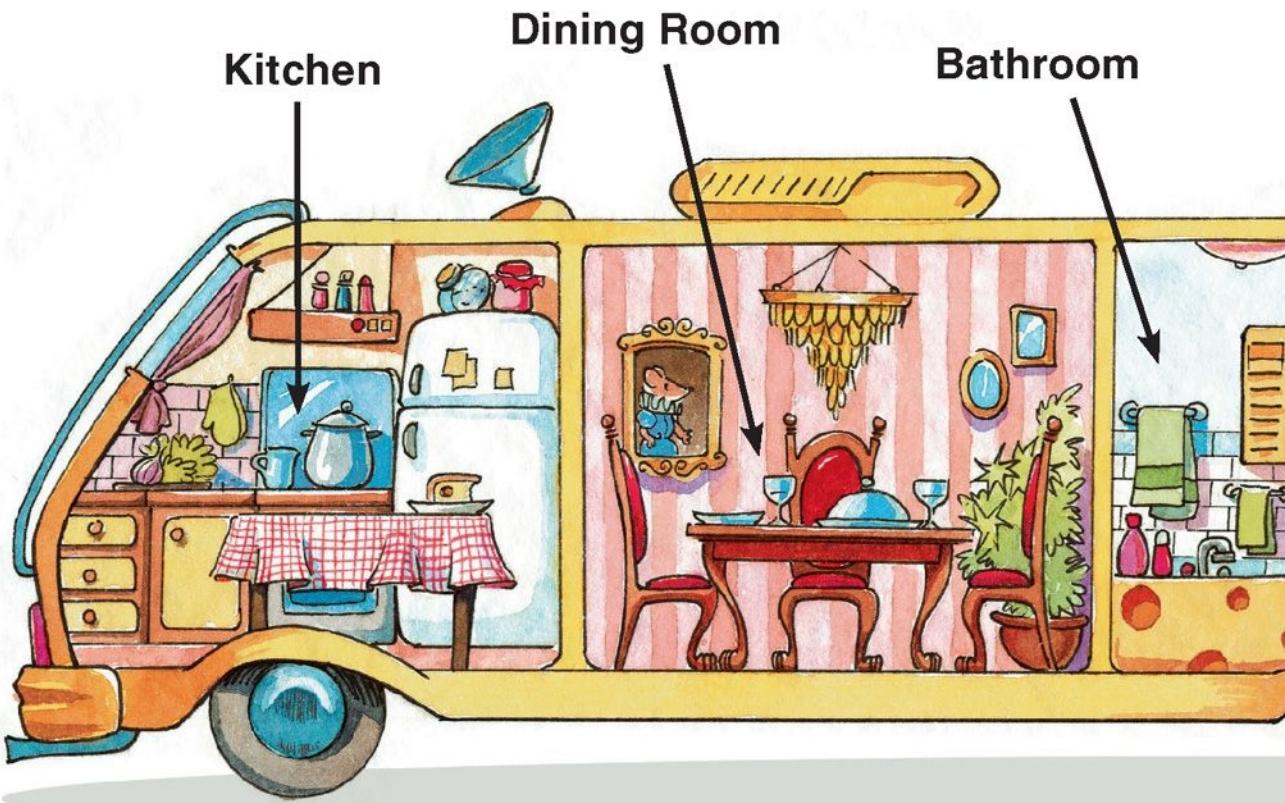
I sighed. Grandfather wasn't dreaming about the camper. He really does have a cheese-colored camper. He putters along in the fast lane at **20** miles per hour, annoying all of the other drivers. They **flash**

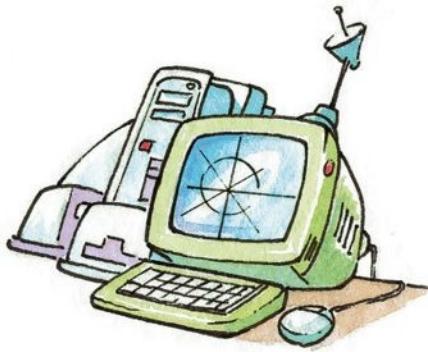


their headlights at him. They honk their horns. But there's no budging Granddad. He's like a snail on a superhighway.

Actually, Grandfather doesn't drive a camper. He drives a *supercamper*. It's longer than fifty mice standing tail to tail.

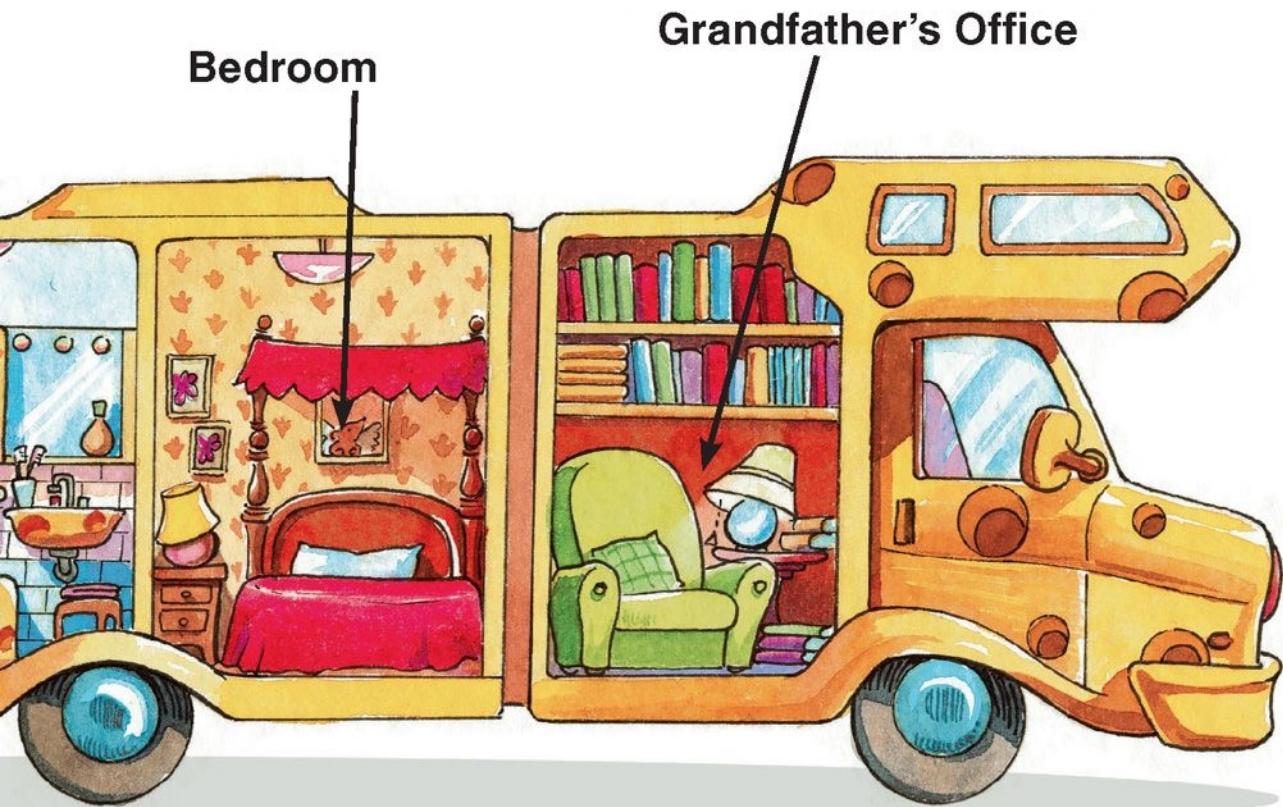
It's painted a deep cheddar **yellow**. And it's filled with everything you can imagine.





The driver's cabin has a **SATELLITE NAVIGATIONAL** system. It lets you pinpoint your position anywhere around the world.

An enormous **crystal** chandelier hangs in the camper's dining room. This is where Grandfather William

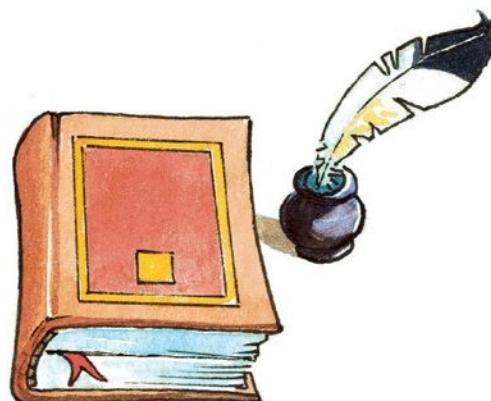




likes to eat Tina's five-course gourmet meals. Grandfather's bedroom has a four-poster bed and its own marble bathroom. There's even a **yellow** Jacuzzi shaped

like a slice of cheese!

Besides all of that, there are a couple of guest rooms, an elegant library filled with **old books**, and a room just for luggage. The place is **bigger** than my entire mouse hole!



Oh, and I didn't even tell you about the kitchen. It's a cook's dream. It has a real



stone oven. And a COMPUTERIZED giant REFRIGERATOR. It tells you when supplies are getting low. Tina loves it. Of course, she travels with Grandfather wherever he goes. Yep, Tina and her silver extendable rolling pin. She never leaves home without it. It was a gift from Granddad. At night, she keeps the rolling pin within paw's reach for protection. Once she accidentally knocked





Tina Spicytail

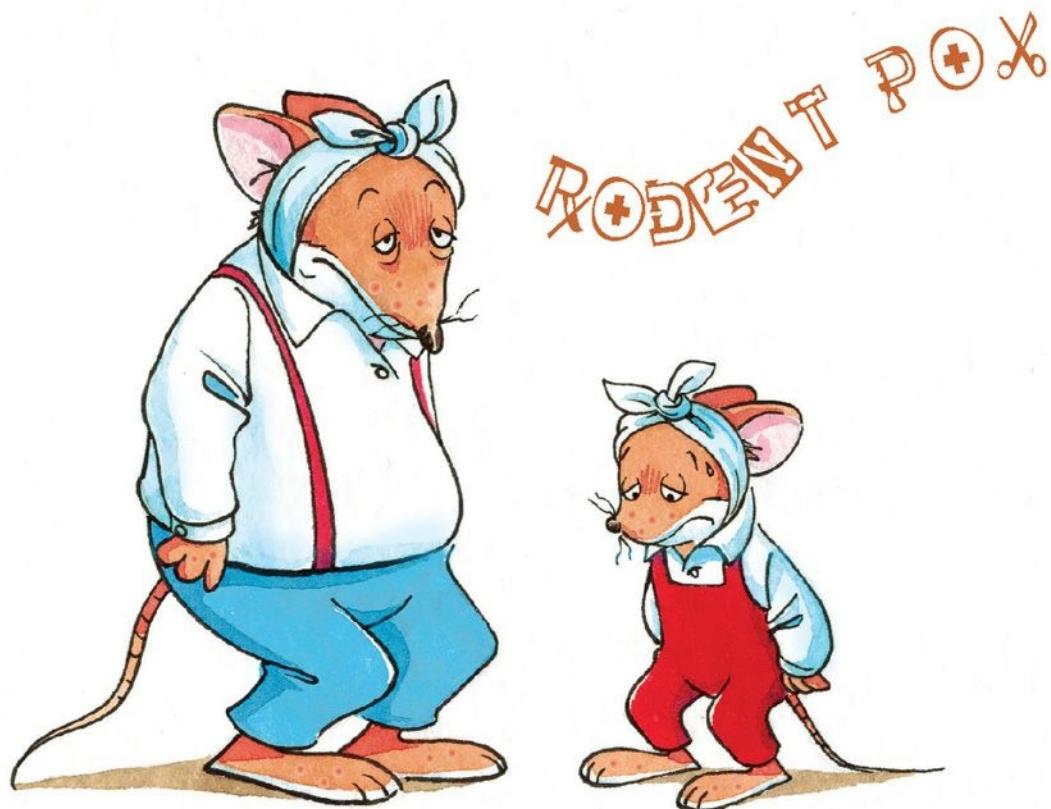
Grandfather William over the head with it. She thought he was a ratburglar!

Still, Tina does a lot more than just cook. In fact, she's one multitalented rodent. She can give an **INJECTION** and fix a flat tire without twitching a whisker. And even more important, Tina keeps Grandfather in line. She's the only rodent I know who is not afraid of him. As I said, she's one **tough mouse!**



KING OF THE ROAD

At last, we were ready to leave. Granddad drove down the block. Two minutes later, we discovered we had a **little** problem. No, make that two little problems. Benjamin and Trap had come down with rodent pox! They were covered from head to paw with





RED BUMPS. We returned home to drop them off.

Now there were only four of us. Granddad, of course, sat behind the wheel. Tina **banged** pots and pans in the kitchen. My sister took pictures, leaning out the window. And I read the map. I tried to give Grandfather William directions, but as usual, he wouldn't listen. When I told him to turn left, he insisted on turning right.

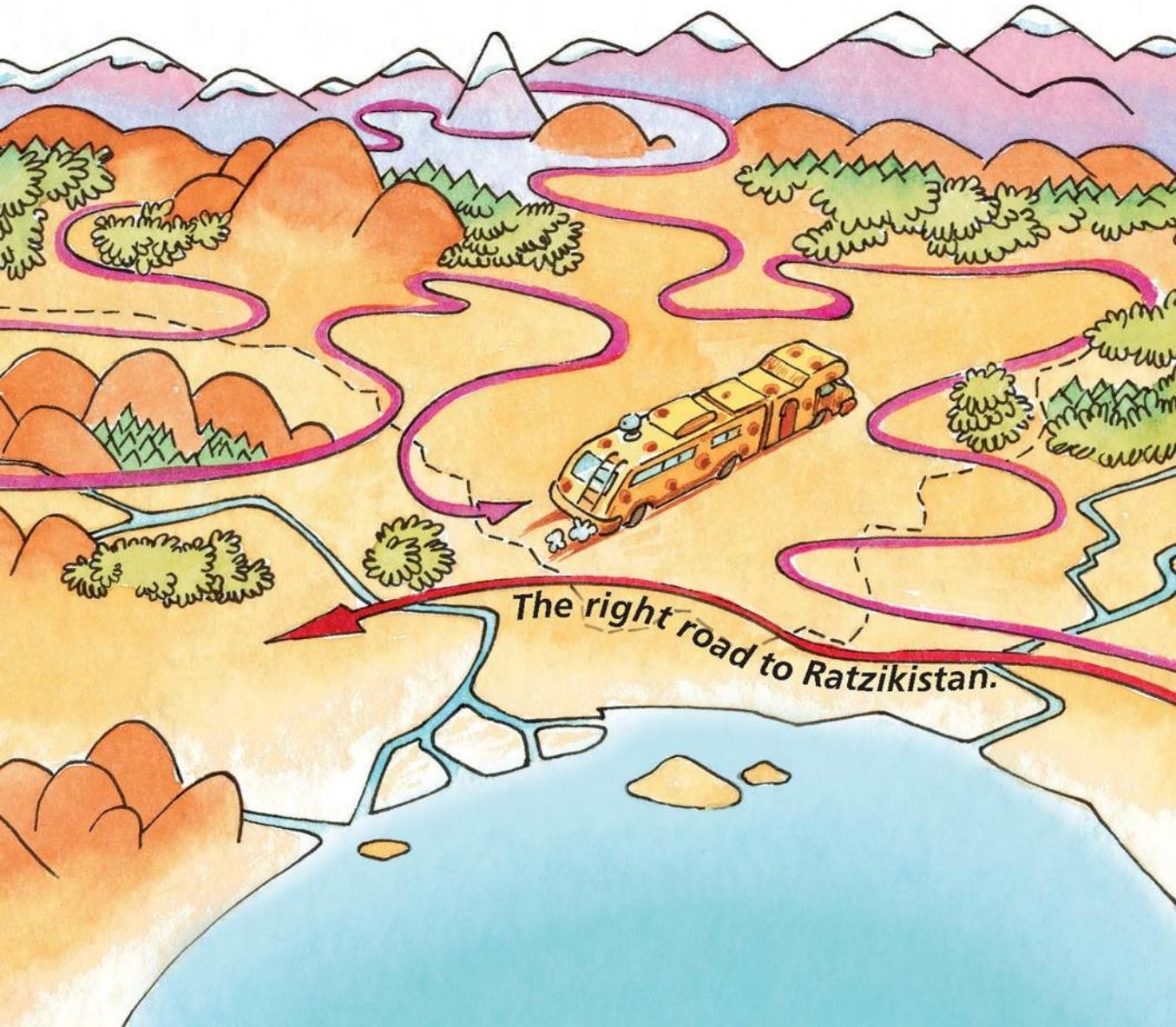
"Don't be a ~~ROADIE~~, Grandson!" he barked. "I know where we're going. You forget, I've **TRAVELED** all over the world. I have my own map right here inside the old noggin." He tapped his head. "Yep, I've got a memory like a steel trap. I can find my way to the Swiss Cheese Islands with my eyes closed. I can make it to Mouse Everest with



one paw tied behind my back. I can even walk and **chew cheese** at the same time.”

In the end, we got lost.

We traveled for hours along a deserted road. We didn’t pass one **SINGLE** road sign.





By nightfall, we found ourselves in the **MIDDLE** of a forest. Granddad didn't seem to mind. He just kept driving and driving.

I tried to use the super-high-tech **SATELLITE SYSTEM**. But it was so confusing. And the instruction manual was missing.

Finally, Grandfather pulled over. "I think I'll take a rest," he announced. "Who wants to drive?"

No one **SQUEAKED**. Do you want to know why? It's an absolute nightmare driving with Granddad. He barks out orders the whole time. He even throws a fit if you blink! Grandfather William says he is **king of the road**. Sometimes he even wears a crown while he's driving. It was a gag gift from Trap. But Granddad took it seriously.



“Who’s taking the wheel? No time for dillydallying!” Grandfather shouted now. “I can’t do it all! **Even a genius needs to rest sometimes.**”



GERONIMO, DO SOMETHING!

We were all in a panic. We couldn't keep driving. We were terribly lost.

"Geronimo, *do something!*" Thea whispered to me. "Maybe you can go out and look for help."

I turned pale. Me? Go out into the deep, DARK woods? I'd rather cut off my tail. Well, OK, maybe not my tail. Maybe my whiskers. Or maybe just some fur.

"Wh-wh-why m-m-m-me?" I stammered.

My sister gave me a look. "Oh, stop being such a scaredy mouse, Geronimoid," she scolded. "I'd go *myself* but I haven't showered. What if I ran into a cute mouse?"

I rolled my eyes. My sister goes on more



dates than Sylvia Sizzlefur, the famous movie star.

Just then, Tina winked at my sister. She waved her rolling pin at me. “*Mr.* Stilton, would you mind going outside for a minute to **SEE** if it is raining?” she **asked**.

I had barely left the cabin when . . .

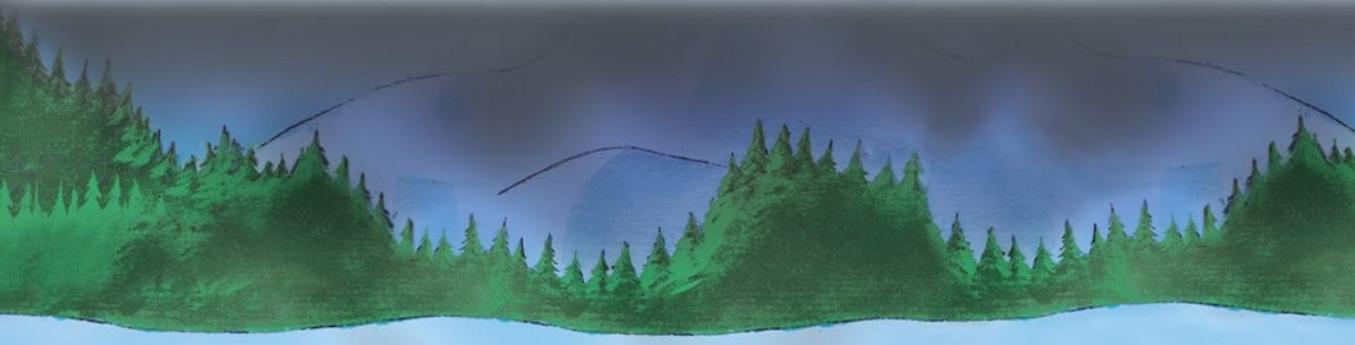
SLAM!

The door shut behind me. I heard the lock click.

Cheese niblets! I had been tricked again. I screamed for them to let me in, but no one answered.

I was all alone.

In the dark, spooky woods!





I heard my sister **singing** in the shower. She'd probably be in there for an hour—and then spend another hour fluffing



Was she making a double-cheese lasagna?



her fur! It was as if she'd forgotten about me! Didn't she care about me at all?

Tina was back in the kitchen. I could hear her rolling pin slamming the countertop.

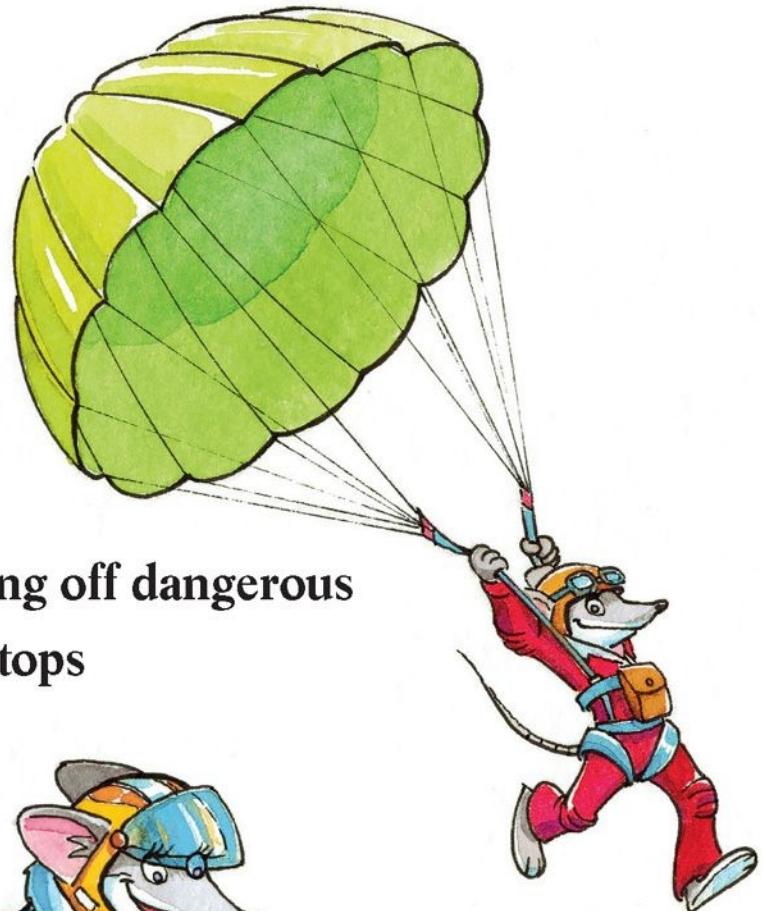
What was she making this time? A double-cheese lasagna? A cheddar casserole?

I **Sobbed**. I would never get a chance to find out. I just knew something **horrible** was going to happen. I mean, I was in the middle of the **wilderness**. And it was so **dark**.

What if a **WILD ANIMAL** attacked me? What if I fell off an **icy** cliff?

What if space mice picked me up and brought me back to their leader?

Oh, how could my sister do this to me? She's the one who's not afraid of anything. She is the **bravest** mouse I know. Nothing scares her. She loves:



1. parachuting off dangerous
mountaintops



2. racing her motorcycle



3. practicing karate (she's a black belt)
4. doing stunts with her airplane
5. extreme survival camps

Yes, my sister, Thea, is one courageous mouse. She's not afraid of *anything* or *anyone*. What a show-off.

I looked around, *shivering*. The forest was as **black** as ink. Luckily, I remembered I had a tiny flashlight attached to my key ring. I pulled it out. The **light** was faint.

Are you afraid of the dark? I am!

SHADOWS loomed everywhere. The branches on the trees looked like skeletons reaching for the sky. Moths transformed into **bats**. A bird **screeched** overhead. I gulped. My paws shook so hard, I almost dropped the flashlight.

Then I saw a **shadow**. It was behind me.



It was big. It was furry. It had a long tail.

"Rat-munching rattlesnakes!"

I screeched. "Who are you? What do you want?!"

No one answered. So I ran like crazy.





The shadow followed. I tripped. The shadow tripped, too. I got up. The shadow got up, too.

Just then, it hit me. I was running from my own **shadow!**





STILTON HIMSELF?

I stopped. I wanted to go back to the camper. But now I had no idea where I was. I started running down a path. It had to lead somewhere, right?

I RAN AND RAN AND RAN... until I tripped again. Did I mention I'm a bit of a klutz? My snout banged into the **ground**. Youch!

I sat up in a daze. That's when I saw him. A furry rodent staring down at me.

"Grandfather?" I mumbled. "How did you find me? Where's the camper?"

The other rodent flashed a blinding light in my eyes. "Grandfather?" he repeated. He sounded confused.



I STOOD UP. No, this wasn't my cranky granddad. It was a **STRANGER**. He had a big square head, a square snout, and square shoulders. Even his tail looked square. How odd.

"Who are you? What do you want?" he squeaked warily.

I told him my whole tale. About Grandfather William, the supercamper, and getting lost. I left out the part about me running from my shadow. I didn't want him to make fun of me. After all, we had just met.

Then I told him my name, *Geronimo Stilton*.

"Stilton!" he **exclaimed**. "*Geronimo Stilton*, the famouse writer? I have read all of your books!" He shook my paw, excitedly. "My name is Sylvester Squaretail," he

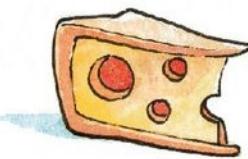


announced. “May I have your *autograph?*
With my name, too?”

I grinned. I must admit I *love* running into my **fans**. They’re so sweet. So sincere. So smart. How do I know they’re smart? They must be. They like to read my books!

I didn’t have any paper, so I wrote my autograph on a leaf. I hoped Sylvester didn’t drop it in the woods. He’d never find it in this **dark**, creepy place.





DOUBLE-CHEESE LASAGNA

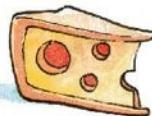
Sylvester slipped the leaf into his pocket. I could tell he was one happy rodent.

I chewed my whiskers. I'd be happy, too, if I could find my way back to the camper. And what about Ratzikistan? Maybe Sylvester knew how to get there.

"Ratzikistan!" he exclaimed when I asked. "You're in the middle of the Fossil Forest. Ratzikistan is in the **OPPOSITE** direction."

Cheese niblets! I knew Grandfather had been driving the wrong way. I groaned.

"Don't worry," said Sylvester. "I can tell you how to get back to your camper. Then I'll give you directions to Ratzikistan."



It took him **half an hour** to explain everything. There was a lot to remember. I thought about writing everything down on some leaves. But I didn't want to rip up ten bushes. I love nature too much.

Sylvester shook my paw and said good-bye. "Have a safe trip!" he called, heading off.

I started down the path. As I walked, I mumbled the directions.

"Let's see, I take the **path** for ten minutes until I reach the **BEECH TREE**," I began. "Or was it an **OAK TREE**? Then I turn right two or three times and cross the brook. At the brook, I head upstream, or maybe downstream. Then I come to a boulder shaped like a cat's head. Or was it a rat's head? Then I cross a small bridge and turn **LEFT**, then **RIGHT**.



No, maybe it was **RIGHT**, then **LEFT** . . . ”

I tramped through the woods for more than an hour. **RATS!** I was lost again. Oh, why didn’t I write those directions down? So what if I destroyed a few bushes? So what if there were fewer leaves in the world? Was that such a crime?

I sat down on a rock. Tears sprang to my eyes. “How did I get myself into such a mess?” I sobbed. “It’s late and I’m hungry. I should be home in ***my cozy mouse hole.*** I should be nibbling on a triple-decker grilled-cheese-and-tomato **SANDWICH** right now.”

Just then, I sniffed the air. Was I dreaming? Did I really **SMELL CHEESE?**

I sniffed again. Yes, I was sure of it. It was the scent of a double-cheese lasagna!

I pulled myself together and got back on



the path. I followed the heavenly scent. Before long, I spotted the twinkling **lights** of the camper.

*I squeaked with joy.
Home at last!*

I couldn't wait to tell my family about my adventures. They would be so **happy** to see me. They must have been worried sick when I didn't **RETURN**.

Inside, I found them all seated at the table.

Thea glanced up. "Oh, it's just Geronimo."

"**Who?**" asked Grandfather.

"Geronimo!" Thea repeated.

Grandfather William shoved more lasagna into his mouth. "Oh, did he go out?" he muttered.

I sank onto the sofa. I told them how I got lost. Then I explained about the lasagna. "I



followed the scent back to the camper,” I said.

Tina smiled. She was very proud of her cooking. Especially her double-cheese lasagna.



DOUBLE-CHEESE LASAGNA

“Speaking of lasagna,” I continued. “Can you cut me a piece?”

Now Tina was practically glowing. “Nope, it’s all gone!” she announced triumphantly. She held up the empty pan. “*Your grandfather* even licked the pan clean. So much for his diet,” she added.

My stomach **RUMBLED** in protest. I couldn’t believe my family hadn’t saved a single piece of Tina’s delicious lasagna for me! I was starving after my midnight ramble through the forest.

*Oh, why had I come on this
miserable trip?*



FIVE POUNDS OF CHEDDAR



The next day, we left at dawn. I pointed Grandfather in the right direction.

For once, he listened to me. What a **SHOCK**. Maybe he was feeling sick. I didn't ask. I was just happy to be moving again.

*“Oh, I’m a traveling mouse! Whoa!
Whoa! Whoa! I’m a traveling mouse!”*

Grandfather William sang.

I **groaned**. Granddad’s singing sounded like the shrieks of a mouse with his tail caught in a trap.

We **drove** farther and farther north.



The landscape began to change. Instead of green trees and bushes, there were **snow-covered** valleys. **Icy** mountains dotted the horizon. **I noticed that the sunlight was getting dimmer and dimmer.** It seemed we had left fall behind and headed straight into winter. And it wasn't just any old winter. It was the coldest winter on the planet.

At lunch, we stopped for a break. I put on my thermal underwear. I put on my heavy parka. I put on my cat-fur hood. But nothing kept the **cold** out. The air froze my whiskers. I had to defrost them back in the camper.

We drove on and on. Weeks went by. Finally, one day, a road sign **EMERGED** through the fog.

R-A-T-Z-I-K-I-S-T-A-N



“Ratzikistan! Cheese niblets, I did it! We’re here!” Grandfather William exclaimed. He pulled over.

“I must find a supermarket immediately,” Tina **declared**.

I stared out into the fog. “Something tells me there aren’t any supermarkets in Ratzikistan,” I told her. “In case you haven’t noticed, we’re in the middle of nowhere!”

Tina **shorted**. She grabbed her canvas shopping bag (no paper bags for Tina). Then she **jumped out of the camper**. She looked around. Then she began hiking





toward a **dirty little** shop on the corner.

Rotting fruit and piles of smelly fish filled the shopwindow. Inside, there were crates and boxes everywhere. What a dump. I peered into one of the **CRATES**. It was filled with jelly jars. I picked one up. Little white balls of something floated in a **MURKY LIQUID**. They looked just like eyeballs. I gulped.

An army of ants crawled out the side of another box. Each ant carried a piece of **SMELLY** green cheese. My stomach lurched.

Ears of **shriveled** corn on the cob stuck out of a wicker basket. I pulled one out and shrieked. It was covered with tiny worms!

By now, I was feeling faint. Did I tell you I'm afraid of ants? Did I tell you I'm afraid of worms? Did I tell you I'm not too crazy about electric toothbrushes, either? Oh, but that's another story. . . .



I watched as Tina marched up to the rodent behind the counter. He had a crooked tail and a crooked smile. She pulled out a long shopping list. “I’ll need five pounds of your **best cheddar!** Six jars of your finest **sardines!** And three loaves of your freshest **SEVEN-GRAIN BREAD!**” she barked.

The rodent dropped his crooked smile. His **EYES** opened wide. Still, he didn’t say a word. After all, what could he say? It was clear they didn’t have those things in this





store. “Forget it, Tina,” I whispered. “I told you this is not a regular supermarket. **THERE ARE NO SUPERMARKETS IN RATZIKISTAN.**”

Tina stamped her paw. One thing you should know about Grandfather’s housekeeper. She never takes no for an answer. And I mean **never**. Once a waiter told Tina that she could not meet the chef at her favorite Italian restaurant, Squeakolini’s. She threw a fit. First she threw her napkin in the air. Then





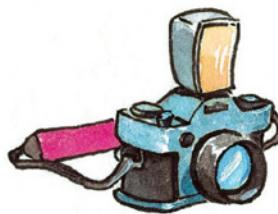
she threw her spaghetti in the air. Then she threw her waiter in the air.

“I will not forget it,” Tina insisted. She slapped her shopping list on the counter. “Give this to your boss,” she told Crooked Tail.

He disappeared into the *back* of the shop. A few minutes later, another rodent came out. He was carrying all the things Tina had asked for.

Tina shot me a smug look. “**No supermarkets, my paw!**” she smirked.





A CAST-IRON STOMACH

We climbed back into the camper. Tina put away the food. Soon Grandfather revved up the engine and we were off again.

I stared out the window as we drove along. **Icy** streams flowed down from the tops of gigantic glaciers. Snowcapped mountains dotted the landscape.

Thea snapped away with her camera. “This place is like a winter wonderland,” she remarked.

We drove on into the night. **The road grew steeper**. We crossed over a narrow bridge. We climbed along a rugged **gorge**.

Patches of ice covered the road. I broke out in **A COLD SWEAT**. One slip and we’d all



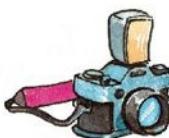
be goners. We'd be nothing but a camper full of **CAT FOOD**. I felt faint. Oh, why had I come to Ratzikistan? It was one big mountain mess. And I was afraid of heights!

At last, we reached a clearing. It overlooked all of the **valleys below**.

Grandfather pulled over. He ~~jumped out~~ of the camper, clapping his paws. "Now, this is what I call good clean air!" he squeaked, taking a deep breath. "Someone write this down. We need to tell tourists to stop **at this very spot**. The view is more breathtaking than the inside of the Cheesy Chews factory!"

My sister began typing away on her laptop. She had been taking notes the whole trip to put in our guidebook to Ratzikistan.

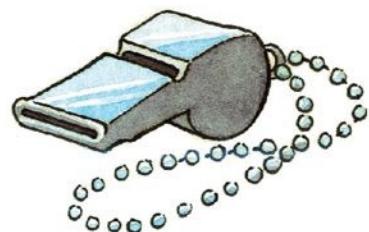
"What would I do without my darling granddaughter?" Granddad William beamed. Then he scowled in my direction.



“It’s a shame you’re not more like your sister, Geronimo,” he added. “It’s a wonder you two are related!”

I decided to **take a walk**. My tail was **flat** from sitting in the camper for so long. Plus, I needed to stretch my paws a little. Get the old blood pumping. Get away from Granddad.

I took a few steps, but I didn’t get far. Seconds later, Tina’s whistle practically **pierced my eardrums**. She uses it to signal that dinner is ready.



“Come on, shake a paw!” she called. “You don’t want your food to get **cold!**”

We sat down at the table. Tina was busy dishing up the meal. She placed one **OLIVE** and a piece of lettuce on Grandfather William’s plate. Recently, she had decided



he needed to go back on his diet.

Granddad stared at his plate and sighed.

“No complaining,” Tina scolded. “You need to drop those pounds or we’ll have to roll you home!”

Then she turned her attention to me. Uh-oh. Tina had **other plans for me**. Recently, she had decided that I was too thin. She began piling my plate high with food. I watched in horror as she filled an enormous bowl to the brim with **spaghetti**. Then she slapped down plate after plate of **pies**, casseroles, **puddings**, breads, and more. There was no way I could eat all of that food. It was enough for ten mice, not one!

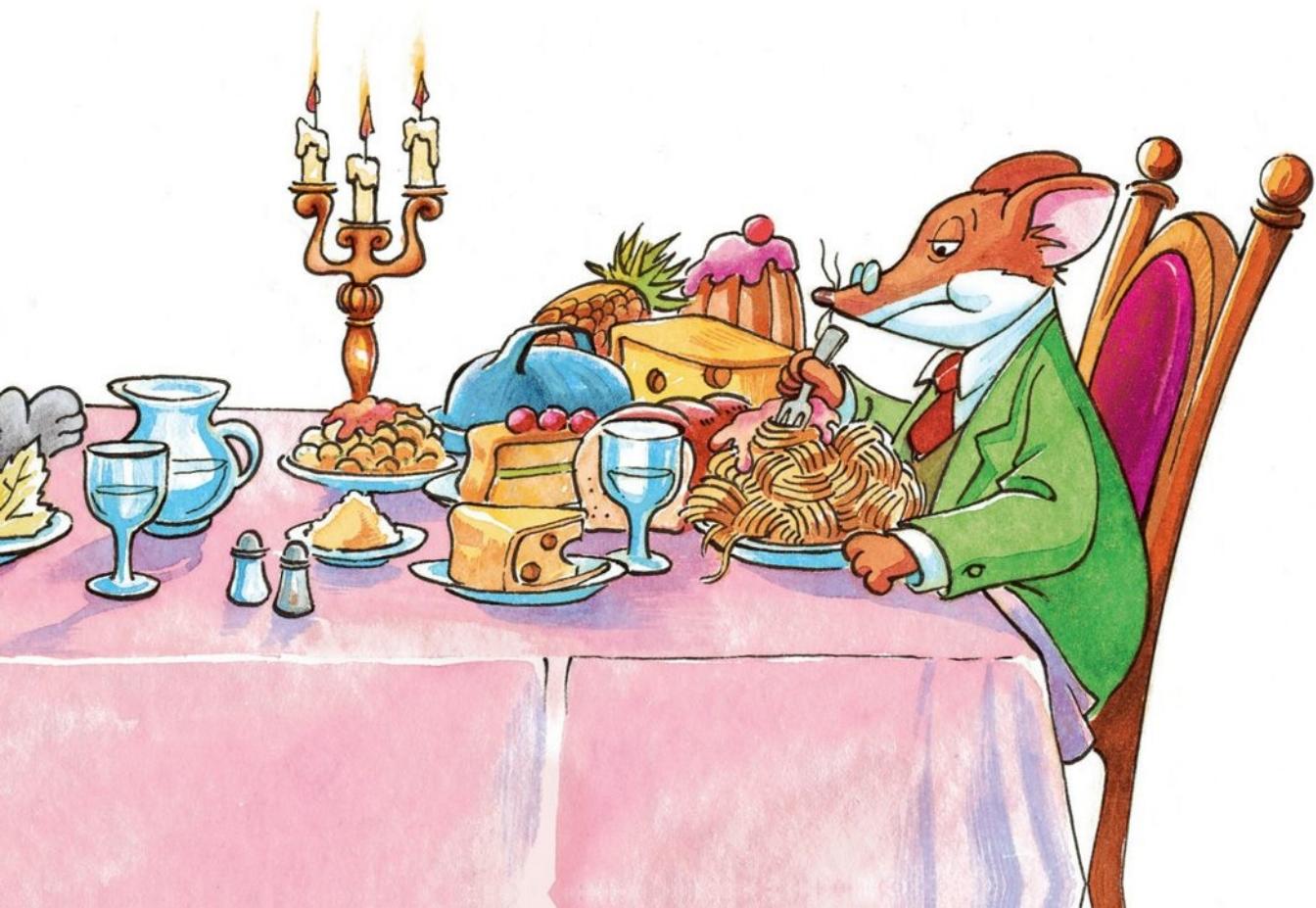


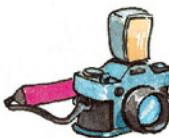


I felt sick. "Um, but, Tina," I began. "I have a weak stomach. I don't think —"

"**NONSENSE!**" Tina interrupted me. "I'll **fix** that stomach of yours. You just need to fill it with a ton of food. Soon you'll be able to eat stones!"

I **CRINGED**. But I didn't tell Tina I wasn't interested in eating stones. I didn't want her to hit the roof.





Meanwhile, Grandfather was eyeing my **food** with envy. He tried to steal a roll, but Tina slapped his paw away.



“I’m doing this for your own good!” she told Granddad. “As for you, *Mr. Geronimo*, you need to try **harder!**”

I opened my mouth to complain. Bad idea. Tina picked up a spoon and **STUFFED** my mouth **full of lard**.

“See, that wasn’t so bad, was it?” she chuckled.

I couldn’t answer. Have you ever tasted **lard**? Think glue, only ten times worse!



THE SUN HAS BEEN KIDNAPPED!

That night, I had **horrible dreams**. First I was drowning in a vat of creamy butter and lard. Then I was being chased by a ten-foot ham-and-cheese sandwich waving a pickle.

I **WOKE UP** with a **start**.

I **STARED** out my window. It was **dark**.

Was it still the middle of the night? No, my alarm clock said it was ten in the morning.

My fur stood on end. I woke up my sister.

**“Thea! The sun has
been kidnapped!”**

I squeaked.



NOT ME!

My sister looked at the **DARK SKY**. She picked up her globe. She punched in some numbers on her calculator. She pawed through her atlas. The whole time, she was mumbling something about longitude and latitude. Finally, she sat back and **sighed**. “Now I know why it is still dark,” she said. “Ratzikistan is so far north, there are only a few **hours** of daylight here.”

We started driving again.

The dark sky made me depressed. Who would buy a guidebook on a place where the sun never shines?

Oh, why did I come on this **MISERABLE** trip? I could be home warming my fur in the bright sunshine. I could be sipping a

Not

ME!

mozzarella milk shake at Happypaw's Outdoor Café. I could be planting **yellow flowers** in my garden. Well, OK, I didn't actually have a garden. But I always wanted one.

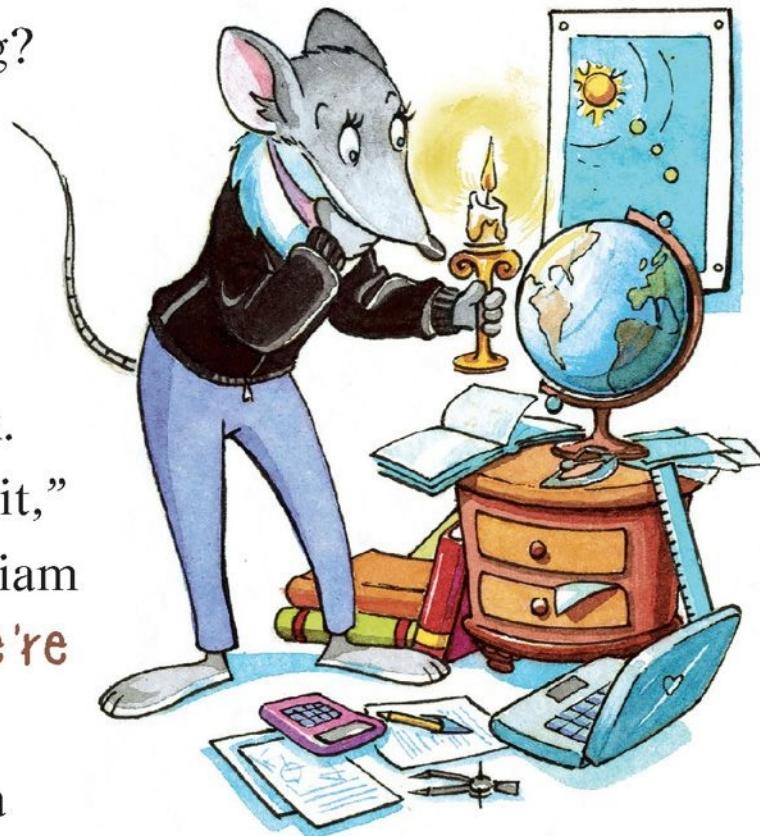
I was **still** dreaming about home when I realized something was wrong. We weren't moving. What was

Granddad doing?

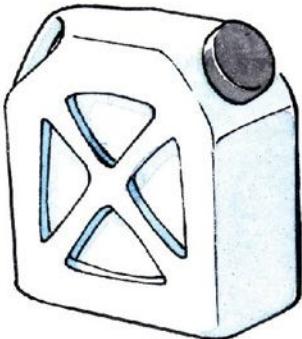
Stopping for another scenic view? It would be hard to see much in the dark.

"Well, that's it," Grandfather William announced. "**We're out of gas.**"

He took out a



Not  ME!



big can from under his seat.

Then he **waved** it under my snout.

“SOMEONE needs to find a gas station,” he squeaked, staring right at me.

I chewed my whiskers.

“Who’s going to go?” I asked suspiciously.

“**Not me, I’m too old,**” grumbled Grandfather.

“**Not me, I’m a lady,**” squeaked Thea.

“Not me, I’m cooking!” shouted Tina.
“I’m making **pizza**. ”

I stared out the window. There was no way I was going out there. It was dark. The ground was **FROZEN**. There were no **TREES OR BUSHES** or happy woodland animals. We were miles away from civilization. Not my kind of place. I

Not  Me!

like lots of rodents. I like taxis. I like bright lights. Oh, how I missed New Mouse City!

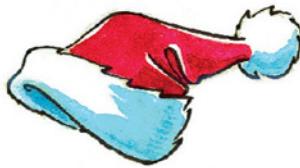
Two seconds later, Granddad pushed me out the door.

Why does he never listen to me?

“Don’t worry, Mr. Geronimo!” Tina called after me. “I’ll keep a nice slice of pizza **WARM** for you!”

I left the camper. I had no choice. They had locked the door behind me!





COULD IT BE SANTA MOUSE?

Right then, I heard the sound of jingling bells. A mouse was coming toward me. He was riding a sled pulled by reindeer.

I **BLINKED**. What was **SANTA MOUSE** doing in Ratzikistan? Christmas was already over.

I took a closer look. No, it wasn't Santa. It was just a local rodent on a **Sled**.

"Slow down, please!" I shouted. "I need a ride!"

But he didn't seem to understand. I waved my gas can in the air. "I need gas!" I tried.

He just smiled and **ZIPPED** right by me. I began running after him. My heart was pounding. My muscles ached. Sweat poured



down my fur. If only I spoke Ratzikistani. Oh, where was a good translator when you needed one?

Suddenly, I spotted something up ahead. Could it be? Yes, it was. A little bus stop stood on a hill.

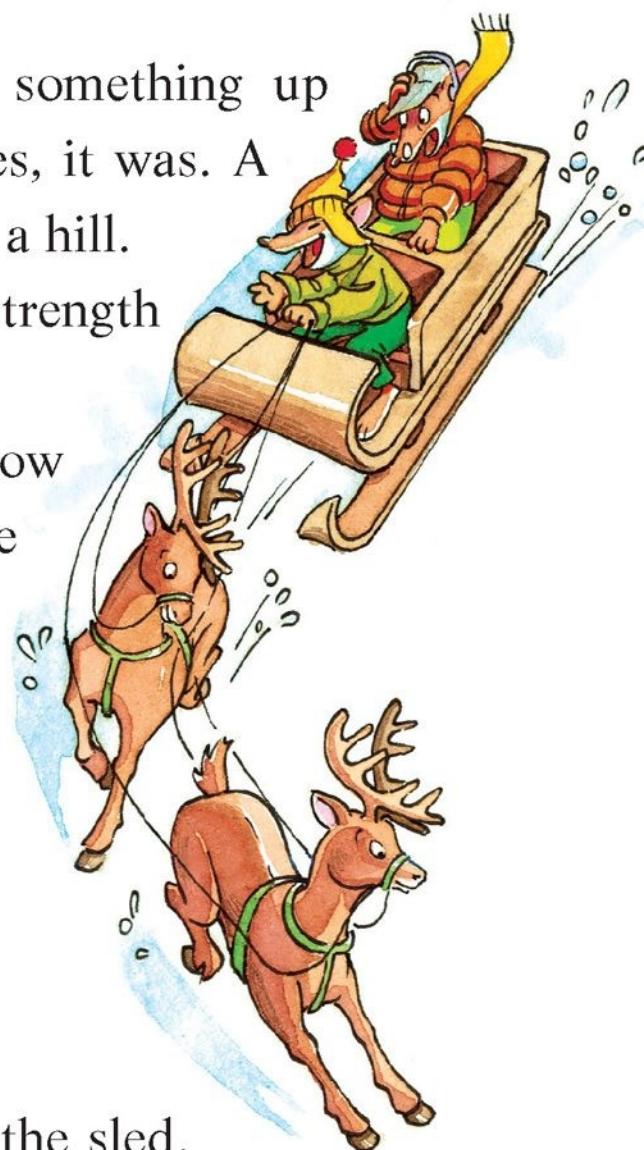
I gathered all of my strength and sprinted for it.

Cheesecake! Somehow I got there before the sled. I held up my paw for him to stop.

This time he got it.
“STOP?” he asked.

I nodded. I was so exhausted, I couldn’t even squeak.

I pulled myself onto the sled.
We took off at **BREAKNECK** speed.





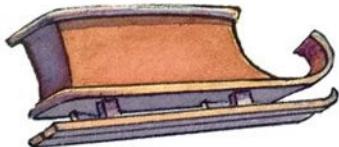
CRAZY RIDER

CHEESE NIBLETS! Sled Mouse was a **crazy** driver. He was going so fast, it felt like we were flying. I held on for dear life. We plunged down steep slopes. We rocketed over **frozen** lakes. I squeezed my eyes shut. Oh, when would this miserable ride be over?

Sled Mouse didn't seem to notice I was shaking like a leaf. He kept **chattering** away. Of course, I had no idea what he was saying. Maybe it was better that way. I might have been even more terrified. I wasn't sure this rodent had all his marbles. He kept doing wacky things like dropping the reins to blow his nose. Or **SCRATCH** his whiskers. Or eat a breath mint.



Sled Mouse was a crazy driver.



Each time the sled went into a slide, I began to squeak.

"**WATCH** the road, I mean the snow, I mean be careful!" I cried.

Each time, he would burst out laughing. Did I say something funny? I wasn't trying to be funny. I was just trying to stay alive!

Why, oh, why had I climbed onto this sled? I could have walked. I had two paws. So it might have taken me a little longer to get somewhere. So what? At least I wouldn't end up **FLATTENED** in a sled crash. I could just see the headlines now: STILTON SQUISHED TO SMITHEREENS IN SLED ACCIDENT! PUBLISHER SLIDES OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH!

I shivered. What a way to go. What a **NIGHTMARE**. What a **strange glowing light** in the distance! Could it be a gas station? I blinked back



tears. **Holey cheese!** It was! I stopped myself from breaking into a *song and dance*. I didn't want to set off the madmouse at the reins.

He screeched to a stop in front of the pump. *I POPPED OUT OF THE SLED*

as fast as my quivering paws could take me. “Thank you!” I squeaked.

Sled Mouse grinned. Then he took off. I must say, I wasn’t entirely sad to see him go.

But now I had a new **PROBLEM**. How would I get back to the camper? I filled up my can with gas and paid the attendant.

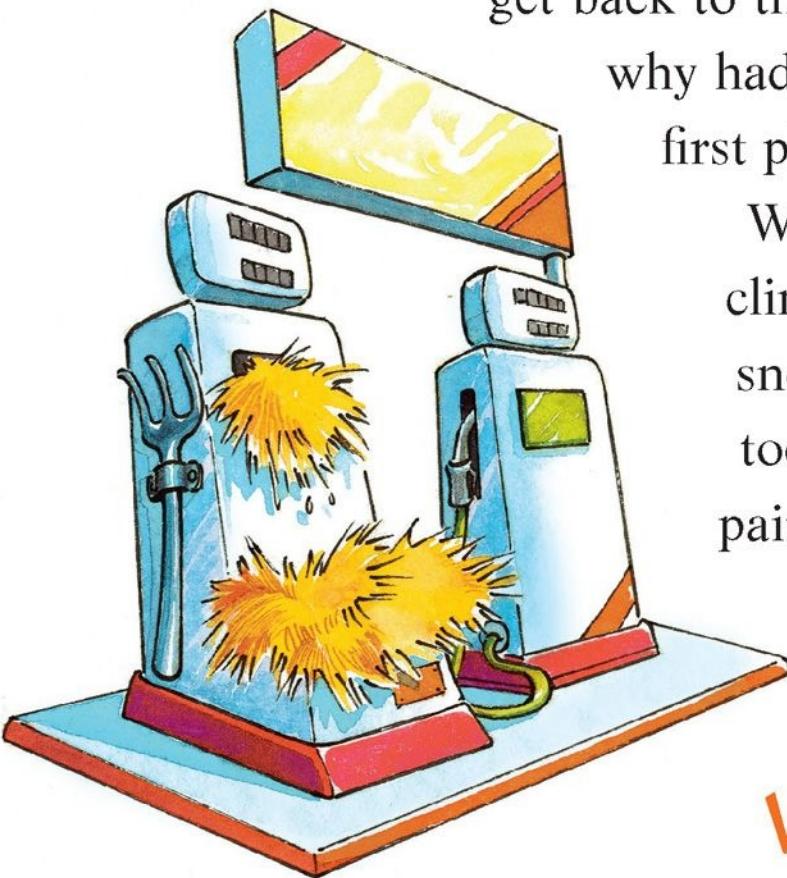
The attendant introduced me to a mouse who was filling up his snowmobile. He offered me a ride. Before getting on, I asked him a few questions. “You’re a safe driver, right?” I said. “You don’t go **FAST**, right?”

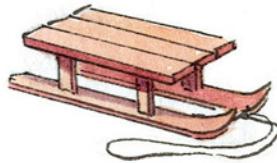
He laughed as if to say, “*I’m the safest driver on the planet.*” Then he said something in Ratzikistani and gave me a **crash helmet**.

Uh-oh. I wasn’t feeling good about this.

But what choice did I have? I had to get back to the camper. Oh, why had I left it in the first place?

With a **SIGH**, I climbed onto the snowmobile. We took off like a pair of schoolmice on the first day of summer **VACATION**.





HEEEELP! HOW DO YOU RIDE THIS THING?

I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT. It was happening all over again. I was off on another wild ride. *Were all Ratzikistanis this crazy? I wondered. Or did I just get lucky? Rancid rat hairs!* It couldn't get any worse than this.

COULD IT?

Half an hour later, it did. The crazy mouse driver started **squeaking** at me in Ratzikistani. For some reason, he kept pointing to the handlebars. What was he trying to tell me? I didn't have a clue. Maybe he was just showing me the parts of

HEEELP! How Do You RIDE THIS THING?



the snowmobile. I decided to play along. “Yes, the handlebars are for steering.” I nodded. What next? The wheels? The horn? Did snowmobiles even have horns? I didn’t know. I had never been on one before.

Just then, the driver **SLAPPED** me on the back. He pointed to the handlebars again. Then he fell sound asleep. I tried waking him up. But it was no use.

“Help!” I shrieked in a panic. “How do you ride this thing?”

My cry rang out in the darkness. Of course, no one answered. What nutty rodent would be outside on such a **freezing** cold night? Or was it day? Who knew? It seemed like it was always nighttime in Ratzikistan. Oh, how I hated this horrible, **dark** place.

HEEELP! How Do You RIDE THIS THING?

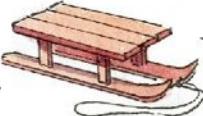


Suddenly, I realized we were **RACING** down an incredibly steep hill. “No!” I screamed. “I want to get off! I want to go home! **I want my mommy!**”

Next to me, I could hear my driver happily



HEEELP! How Do You RIDE THIS THING?



snoring away. Then the snowmobile **hit the ground**. It was a miracle. We were all still in **ONE PIECE**.

Finally, my driver woke up. He **STRETCHED**. He **YAWNED**. Was this mouse for real? *Couldn't he see we were speeding along out of control? Couldn't he see I was about to have a nervous breakdown?*

Right then, a big cheese-colored shape appeared before my eyes. It was the camper!

flash!

f|a|s|h! f|a|s|h!

Flashes of light snapped in the darkness. My sister, Thea, was taking pictures. **Rats!** My fur must look like a mess. But there was no time to worry about it

HEEELP! How Do



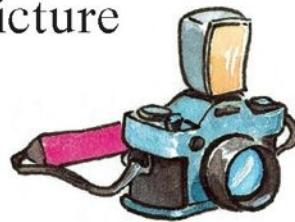
YOU RIDE THIS THING?

now. “Where are the brakes?!” I shrieked in a panic.

At last, the driver took over. He spun around right in front of the camper. I was ~~thrown out~~ of the snowmobile. I landed snout-first in an enormous snowbank.

The driver tossed me the gas can. Then he **SPED OFF**.

My sister took one last picture of me with a snout full of icicles. “These pictures are perfect for our book!”



she declared. “And I’ve got the perfect caption: Fun times in Ratzikistan!”

I didn’t have the **strength** to reply.

I dragged myself to the camper. **Could it get any worse?** I wondered.

And then it did. As soon as I walked in,

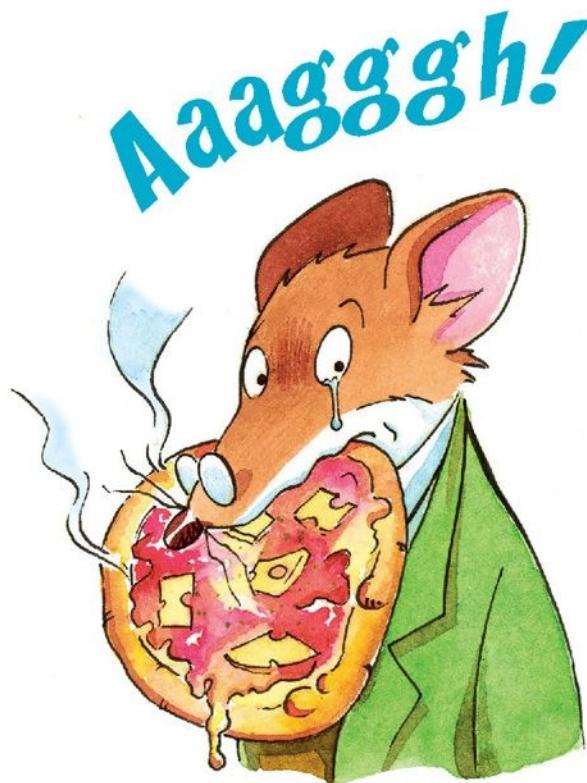
HEEELP! How Do You RIDE THIS THING?



Tina stuffed a **SIZZLING** slice of pizza into my mouth. Have you ever burned your tongue on hot pizza? I **HOWLED** in pain.

“See, *Mr.* Geronimo, I told you I’d keep your pizza warm,” Tina said proudly.

Why, oh, why had I come on such a crazy adventure?





I'M NOT A SPORTSMOUSE

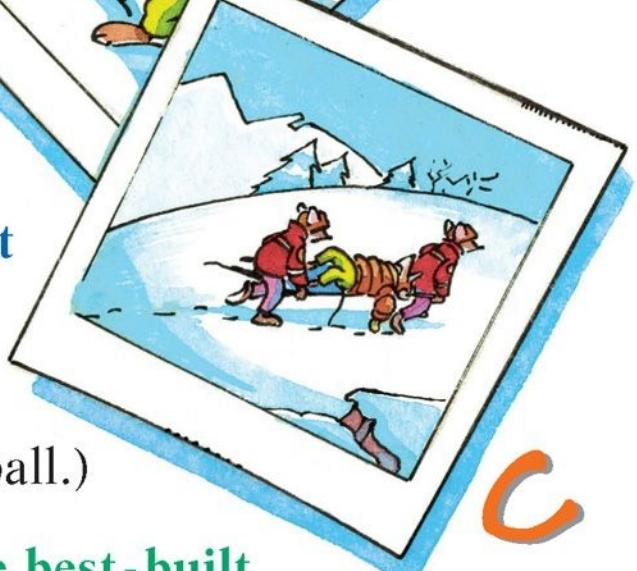
We spent the next few days *r○aming ar○und* Ratzikistan. We tried to interview the locals. But it was hard. After all, they didn't speak English. We couldn't understand one **SQUEAK**.

Then my sister decided one of us should try all of the local **SPORTS**. Guess who was the lucky mouse? That's right, yours truly.

Oh, why does my family like to torture me? They know I'm not a **sportsmouse**. I'm always the last rodent picked for a team. Still, there I was, joining in on a . . .

**A****B****A. snowball fight**

(They creamed me two seconds after I made my first snowball.)

**C****B. contest for the best-built snowmouse** (I accidentally knocked the **HEAD** off when I tried to put on whiskers.)**C. mountain hike** (They carried me back on a stretcher.)

I'M NOT A



SPORTSMOUSE

D. **skating race** (I fell through a crack in the **ICE**. When they pulled me out, I was **FROZEN** solid.)

E. **stinky fish contest** (I lost. But I'm telling you, mine was the stinkiest.)

F. **class on how to build an igloo** (My door was so small, I was trapped inside.)





HEAVENLY CHEDDARELLA!

We were all feeling depressed.

It was clear Ratzikistan wasn't exactly a great vacation spot. "Who would want a guidebook to this place?" **my sister said with a sigh**. I **shrugged**. What could I say? Who would want to visit a place that was forty degrees below zero? A place where the sun never shines? A place **where all the fish are stinky?**

Thea switched off her **LAPTOP COMPUTER**. It was time to go home. For once, even Grandfather William agreed.

*B*EFORE WE LEFT, I TOOK A **SHORT WALK.**

I HEADED TOWARD A NEARBY VILLAGE.



I passed a house. Through the window, I saw a Ratzikistani family having dinner. They were **happily** munching on a very tasty-looking golden-yellow cheese.

Right then, one of the mice saw me at the window. She **invited** me in. I tried to say no, but she didn't understand. She pulled me inside. **Immediately**, I was hit with the most amazing scent. It was coming from the golden-yellow cheese. The mouse cut me a slice. This time, I didn't refuse. I took a nibble. Then two. Then three. **CHEESECAKE!** It was the best cheese I had ever tasted in my life! It was more **delicious** than the chunkiest cheddar. It was more **tasty** than the best blue cheese. I





was in heaven. I had to find out the name of that cheese.

“What do you call this?” I asked the mouse who had invited me in. She grinned. Then she said, “**CHEDDARELLA.**”

I shook my head. Was she making fun of me? It sounded like she’d said “cheddar,” but it didn’t taste like any cheddar I’d ever eaten.

“No,” I tried again. “The name. Can you please tell me the name of this cheese?”

“**CHEDDARELLA,**” she repeated in a louder voice.

Now I didn’t know if she meant cheddar or mozzarella. Oh, why do mice like to **tease** me? Do I look like a pushover?

“Please, madam,” I insisted. “I don’t have time for jokes. I just want to know the name of this cheese.”



I saw a Ratzikistani family having dinner.



This time she pounded the table. She picked up the cheese and held it under my snout. “CHEDDARELLA! CHEDDARELLA! C-H-E-D-D-A-R-E-L-L-A!” she squeaked at the top of her lungs.

I slapped my forehead. Now I got it. It was called cheddarella cheese. Who would have thought such a *scrumptious* cheese would have such a funny name?

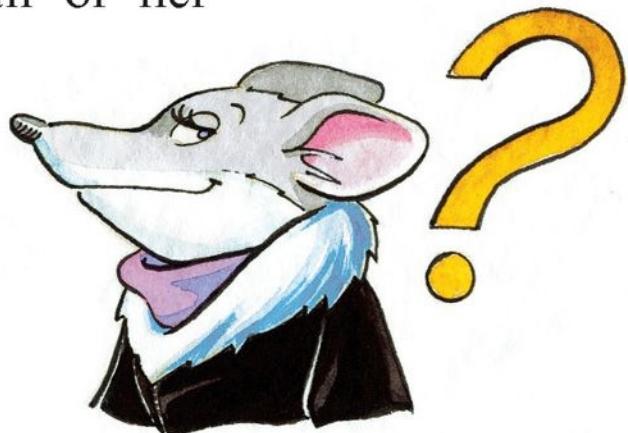
I ran to tell the others.



DON'T LOOK SO WORRIED . . .

Thea was the most excited about the golden-yellow cheese. “I have the most brilliant **IDEA!**” she squeaked. That **night**, I heard her typing away on her computer. What was my crazy sister up to now?

You just never knew with Thea. One time, she tried to get into the fashion business. She began *designing her own clothes*. She made me test out all of her samples. I was running around in **Skirts** for weeks. Everyone at the office made fun of me. Lucky for





me, Thea came to her senses. She realized she was better at shopping for clothes than making them.

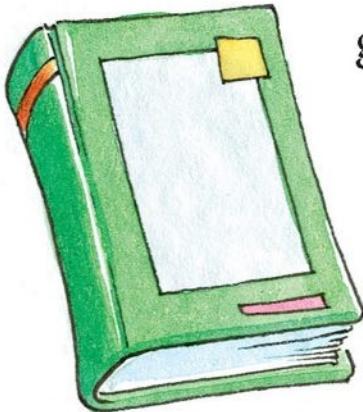
The next morning, Thea scampered into the kitchen. In one paw she held a cup of **steaming coffee**. In the other was a wad of papers. “Here it is!” she announced. “The **ANSWER** to our **GUIDEBOOK PROBLEM!**”

I chewed my whiskers nervously. What had Thea cooked up this time? There was no way she'd get me in a **dress** again. And I put my paw down at the thought of high heels.

"Don't look so worried, **Gerry Berry**," my sister giggled. "My idea is really very **simple**."

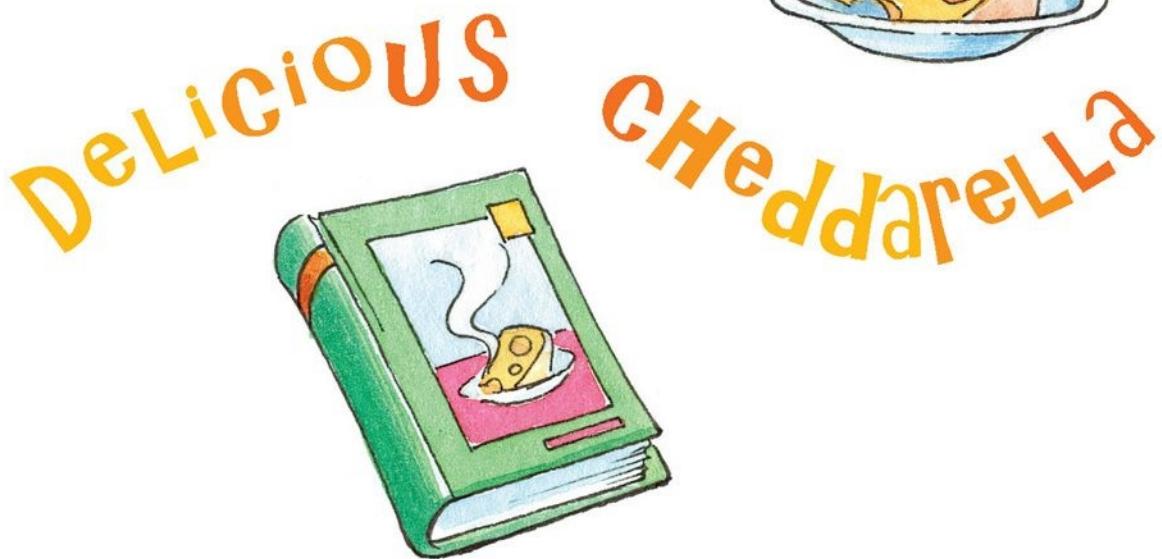
And it was. No mouse would want to buy a

very simple
very simple
very simple
very simple
very simple
very simple
very simple



guidebook on Ratzikistan, Thea reminded us. But every mouse would love to sink his or her teeth into some delicious cheddarella cheese.

"Instead of a guidebook, we'll publish a **coo**ok**book!**" Thea squeaked. "We can fill it with yummy cheddarella cheese recipes!"





OUR COZY HOME



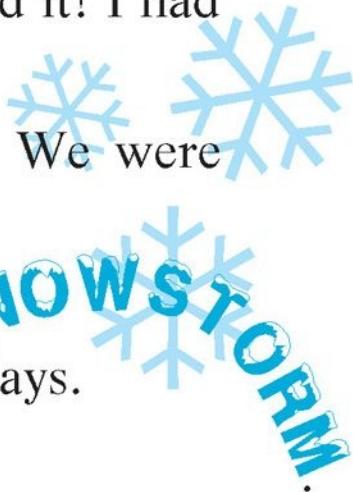
We had all kinds of adventures on our way home.

One day, we got stuck in the middle of the woods. A tree had

FALLEN in front of our camper. To get through, we had to **SAW IT** into small **PIECES**. Can you guess who did all of the sawing? You guessed it! I had blisters all over my paws!

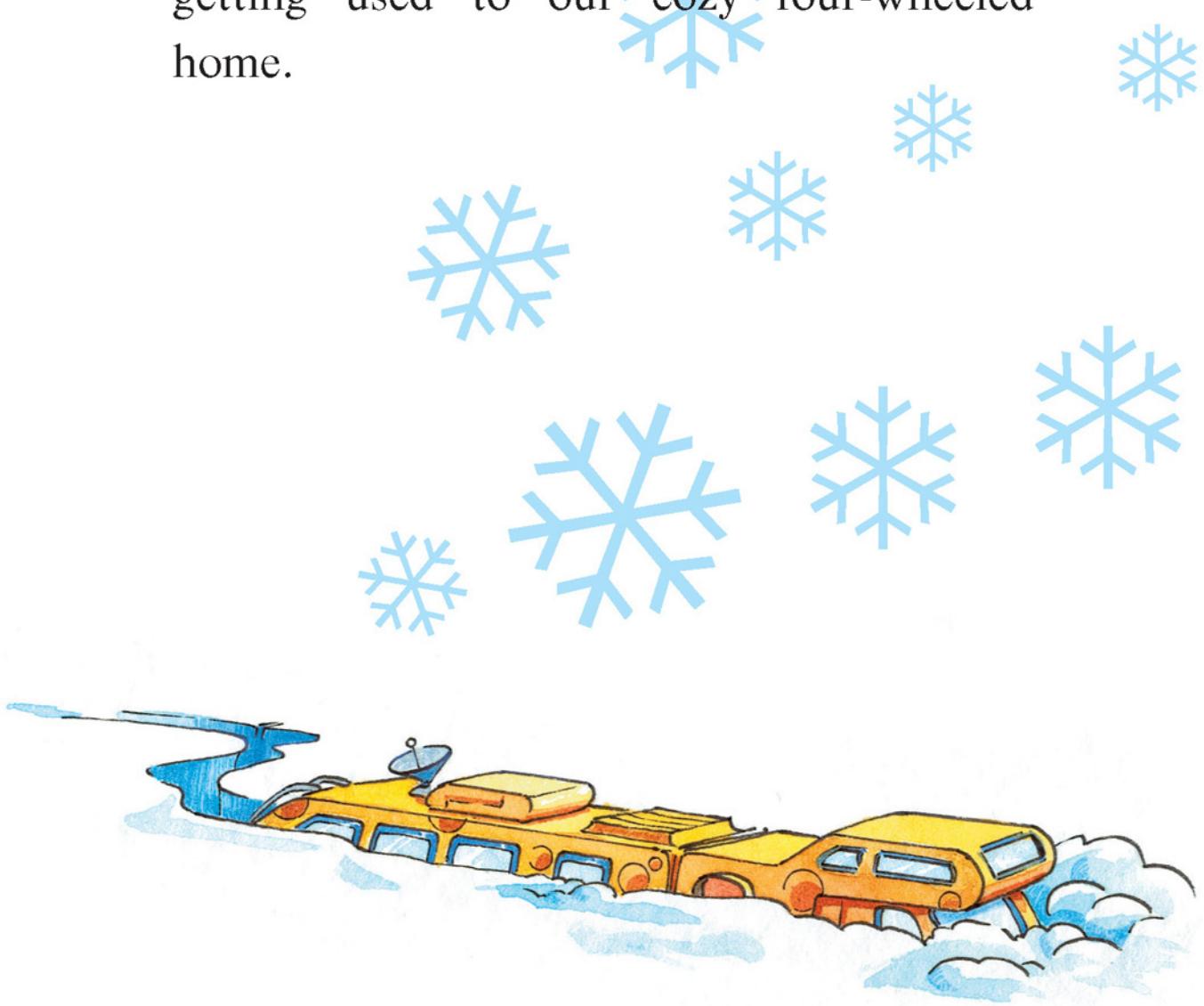
After that, we had a flat tire. We were trying to avoid a caribou.

Later on, we got caught in a **SNOWSTORM**. We were **snowed** in for three days.





Tina kept our spirits up with her delicious cheddarella cheese dishes. Plus, I must admit it was **nice** to be together. I was getting used to our **cozy** four-wheeled home.





ONE THING AT A TIME

I sat next to Grandfather on the way home. I had to give it to the old mouse. He never seemed to get tired. He was **STUCK** to the wheel from dawn till **dusk**. He never spoke while **driving**. “When I am **driving**, I concentrate on the road,” he explained. “The **secret** of success, Geromino, is to do just one thing at a time!”

I thought about what Granddad had said. I watched the road unfolding before us. It was pretty fascinating. At each turn, we saw something different.

Maybe traveling wasn’t so bad after all, I decided. Still, I couldn’t wait to get back to my **comfy** mouse hole. I’d slip my paws into



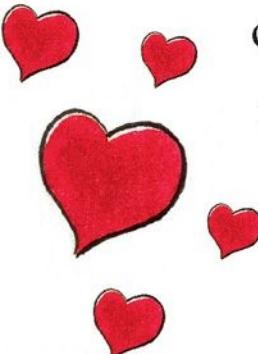
my **CAT-FUR** slippers. I'd whip up a tasty mozzarella milk shake. I mean, don't get me wrong, Grandfather William's supercamper was awesome. But I love my *home sweet home*.

"You look tired, Geronimo," Granddad observed. "Why don't you get some rest? I'll be fine."





I SMILED. Yes, Grandfather could be obnoxious at times. He was one rodent who really knew how to drive me up a clock. But he really wasn't such a bad mouse.



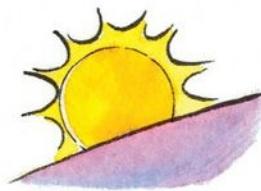
ONE THING

AT A TIME



He had lots of crazy ideas, sure, but some of them were good ones. And I knew that no matter what, he **loved** me.





ANOTHER DAY, ANOTHER ADVENTURE

When I woke up, I spotted a **sign** on the side of the **road**. Cheese niblets! We were almost home!

Grandfather let me **drive** the rest of the way. Of course, he had to scream a few commands from the backseat. “Not too fast! **Not too slow!** Stop on red! Go on green!” he called.

I didn’t even care. We were going home.

At last, we reached New Mouse City. Rodents rushed along the sidewalks.

Taxicabs screeched and honked their horns. Buildings





touched the sky. Ah, *beautiful New Mouse City*. Have you ever been there? There's really no place like it!

Even though I was thrilled to be home, I felt *sad* leaving everyone. I was used to Tina's yummy meals. (Although I could do without the force-feeding.) And Granddad had grown on me.

“The best way to get to know a rodent is to travel with him,” Granddad always said. I guess he was right. I knew a lot about Grandfather after this trip.

I **Climbed out in front** of my house. Thea called a taxi. Grandfather William and Tina boarded the camper again.

“Will I see you tomorrow, Grandfather?” I asked.

He chuckled. “Who knows, Geronimo,” he replied. “Tomorrow is another day.”

ANOTHER DAY,



ANOTHER ADVENTURE

Another day, another **adventure!**"

Tina **waved** good-bye with her silver rolling pin. Then they both vanished into the night.





JUST GRANDDAD

Would you like to know how it all ended? Well, let me tell you. Our cookbook, *Secret Recipes from Ratzikistan*, was a huge success. **Three** million copies were sold!

Yesterday I got an e-mail from Grandfather. “See? I told you so! Three million copies! Three! Three! **Threeee!!!!**” he wrote.

Did I mention that Grandfather loves it when he’s right?

I have stopped saying that **I hate traveling**. I mean, how else can you see the world? I am even planning a Christmas trip with the family!

Yes, Thea and Trap will pick on me.

JUST

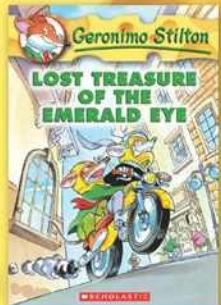


GRANDDAD

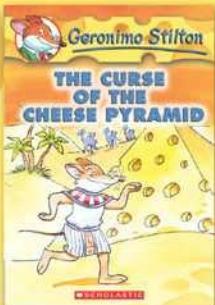
Tina will make me eat **TONS** of food.
And Granddad, well, he'll just be Granddad.
*But I guess that's not such a bad
thing after all. . . .*



**Don't miss
any of my
fabumouse
adventures!**



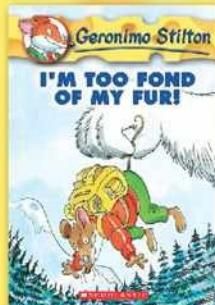
#1 Lost Treasure
of the Emerald Eye



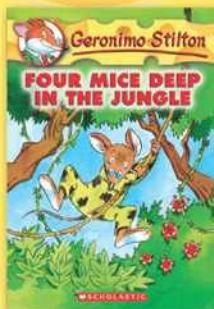
#2 The Curse
of the Cheese
Pyramid



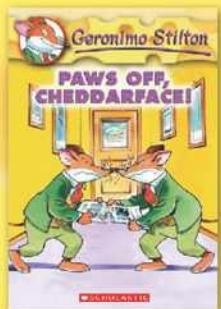
#3 Cat and
Mouse in a
Haunted House



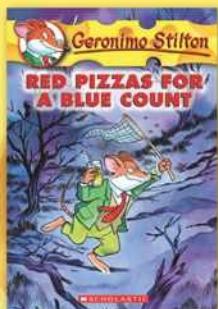
#4 I'm Too Fond
of My Fur!



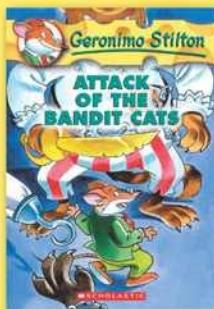
#5 Four Mice
Deep in the Jungle



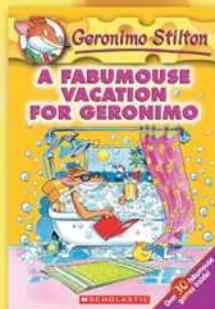
#6 Paws Off,
Cheddarface!



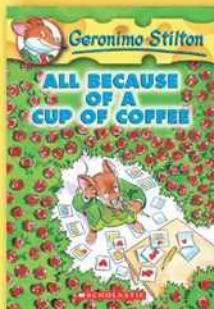
#7 Red Pizzas for
a Blue Count



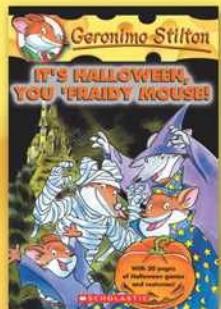
#8 Attack of the
Bandit Cats



#9 A Fabumouse
Vacation for
Geronimo



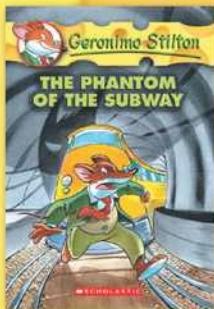
#10 All Because of
a Cup of Coffee



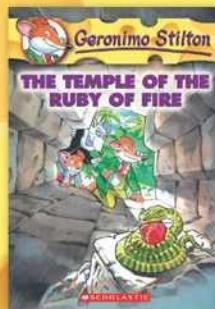
#11 It's
Halloween, You
'Fraidy Mouse!



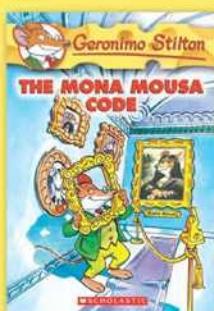
#12 Merry
Christmas,
Geronimo!



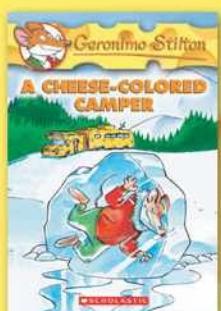
#13 The Phantom
of the Subway



#14 The Temple of
the Ruby of Fire



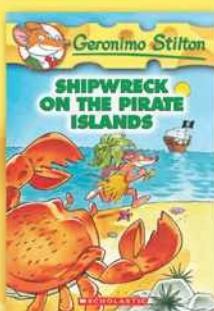
#15 The Mona
Mousa Code



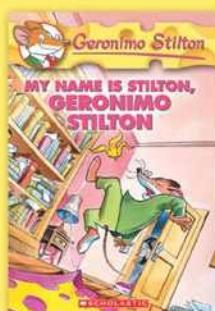
#16 A Cheese-
Colored Camper



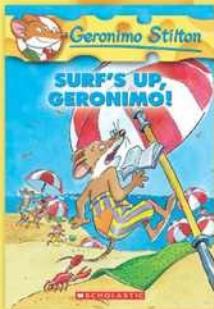
#17 Watch Your
Whiskers, Stilton!



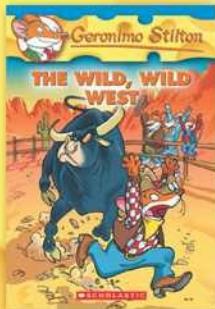
#18 Shipwreck on
the Pirate Islands



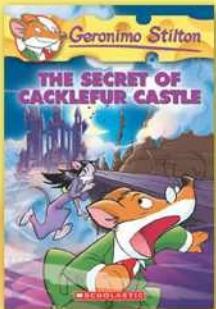
#19 My Name Is
Stilton, Geronimo
Stilton



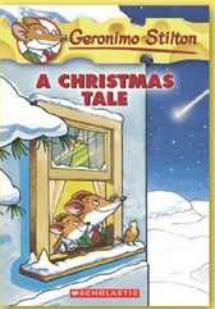
#20 Surf's Up,
Geronimo!



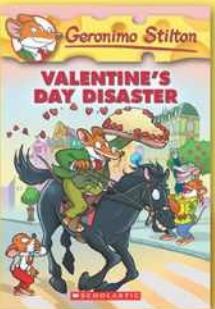
#21 The Wild,
Wild West



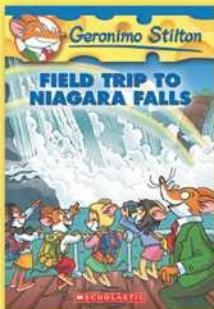
#22 The Secret
of Cacklefur
Castle



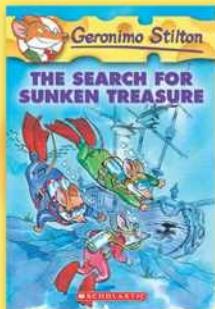
A Christmas Tale



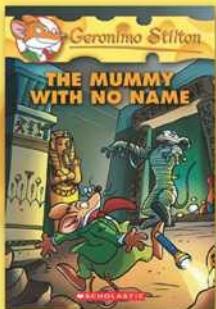
#23 Valentine's
Day Disaster



#24 Field Trip to
Niagara Falls



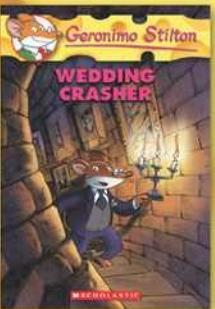
#25 The Search
for Sunken
Treasure



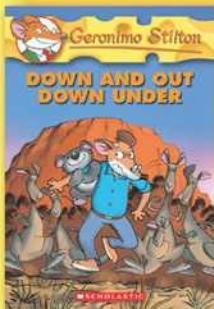
#26 The Mummy
with No Name



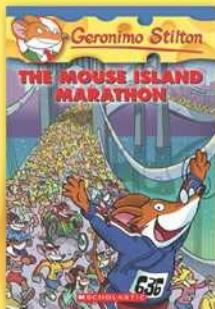
#27 The
Christmas Toy
Factory



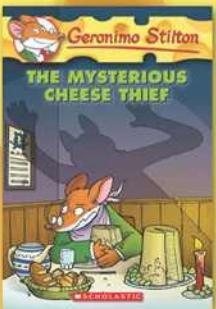
#28 Wedding
Crasher



#29 Down and
Out Down Under



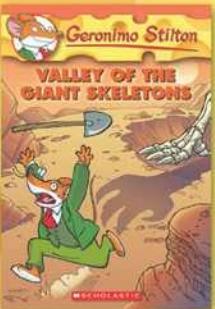
#30 The Mouse
Island Marathon



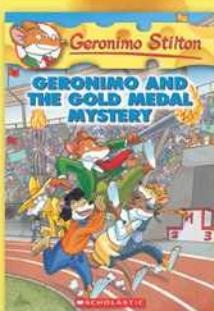
#31 The
Mysterious
Cheese Thief



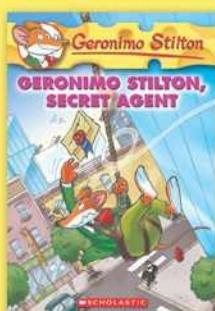
Christmas
Catastrophe



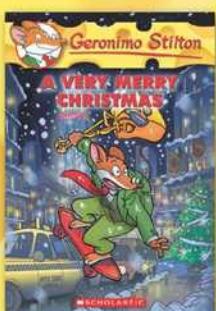
#32 Valley of the
Giant Skeletons



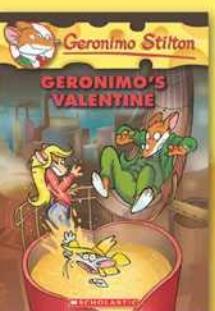
#33 Geronimo
and the Gold
Medal Mystery



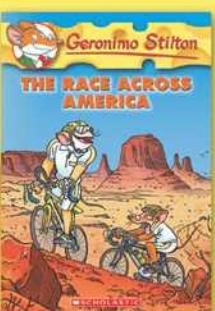
#34 Geronimo
Stilton, Secret
Agent



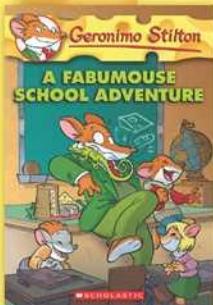
#35 A Very Merry
Christmas



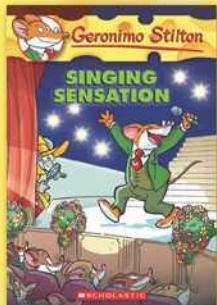
#36 Geronimo's
Valentine



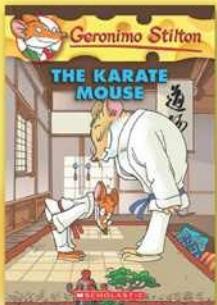
#37 The Race
Across America



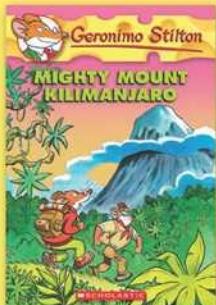
#38 A Fabumouse School Adventure



#39 Singing Sensation



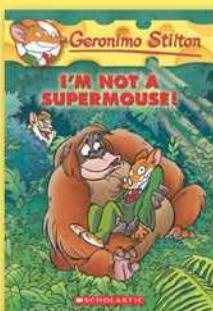
#40 The Karate Mouse



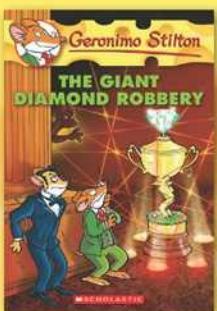
#41 Mighty Mount Kilimanjaro



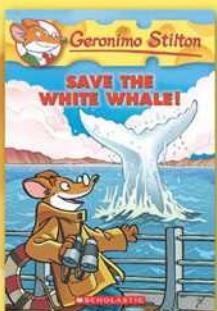
#42 The Peculiar Pumpkin Thief



#43 I'm Not a Supermouse!



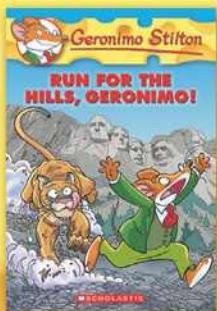
#44 The Giant Diamond Robbery



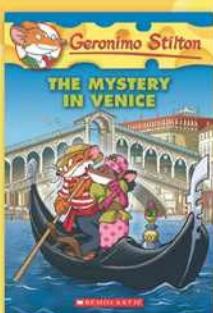
#45 Save the White Whale!



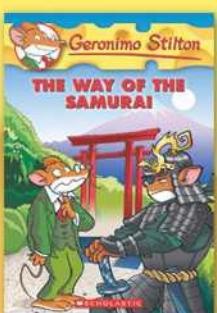
#46 The Haunted Castle



#47 Run for the Hills, Geronimo!



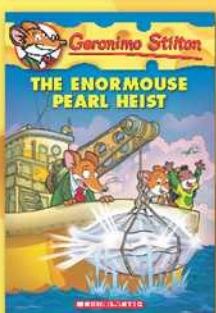
#48 The Mystery in Venice



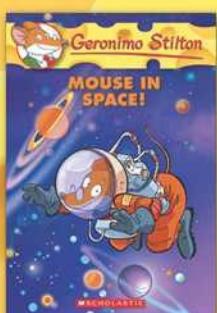
#49 The Way of the Samurai



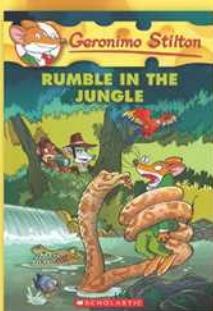
#50 This Hotel Is Haunted



#51 The Enormouse Pearl Heist



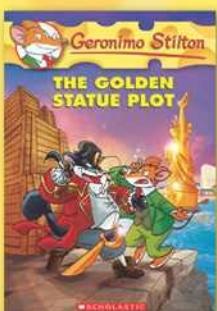
#52 Mouse in Space!



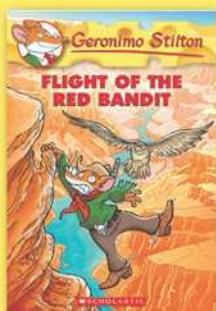
#53 Rumble in the Jungle



#54 Get into Gear, Stilton!



#55 The Golden Statue Plot



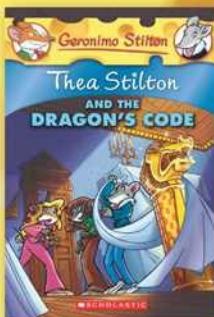
#56 Flight of the Red Bandit



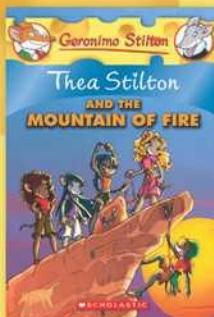
Special Edition:
The Hunt for the
Golden Book



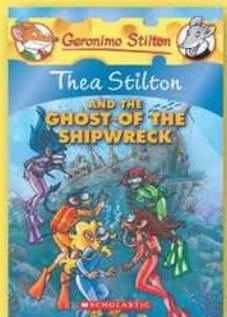
**Check out
these exciting
Thea Sisters
adventures!**



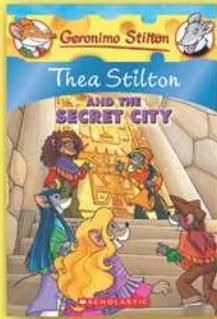
Thea Stilton and the
Dragon's Code



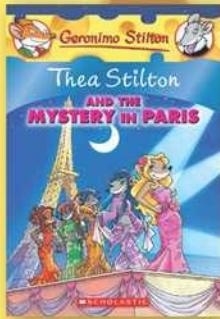
Thea Stilton and the
Mountain of Fire



Thea Stilton and the
Ghost of the Shipwreck



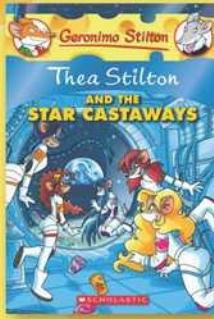
Thea Stilton and the
Secret City



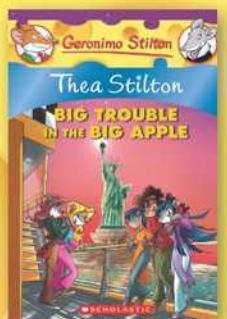
Thea Stilton and the
Mystery in Paris



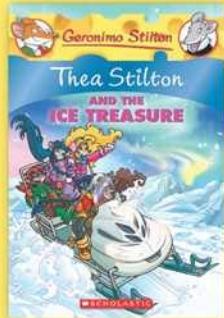
Thea Stilton and the
Cherry Blossom Adventure



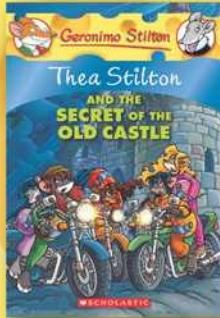
Thea Stilton and the
Star Castaways



Thea Stilton: Big Trouble
in the Big Apple



Thea Stilton and the
Ice Treasure



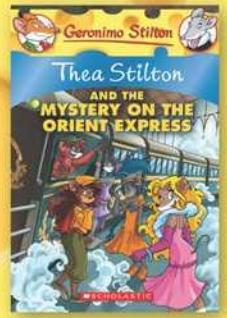
Thea Stilton and the
Secret of the Old Castle



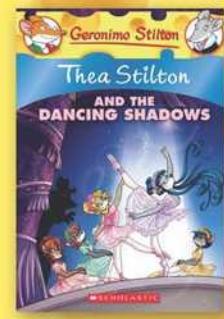
Thea Stilton and the
Blue Scarab Hunt



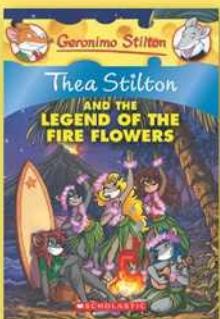
Thea Stilton and the
Prince's Emerald



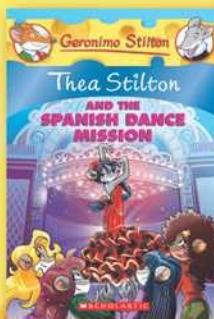
Thea Stilton and the Mystery
on the Orient Express



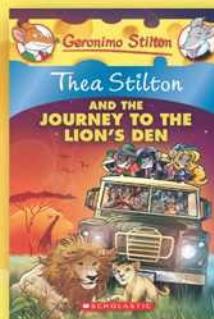
Thea Stilton and the
Dancing Shadows



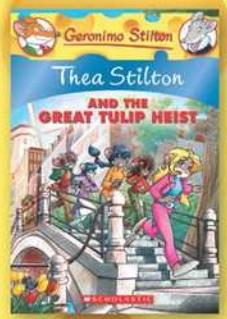
Thea Stilton and the
Legend of the Fire
Flowers



Thea Stilton and the
Spanish Dance Mission



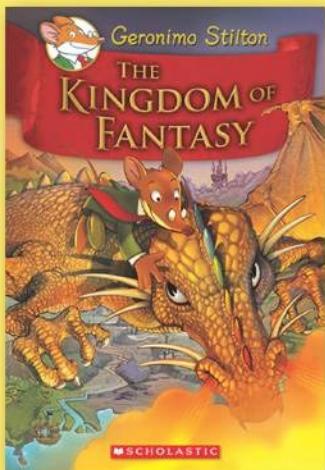
Thea Stilton and the
Journey to the Lion's Den



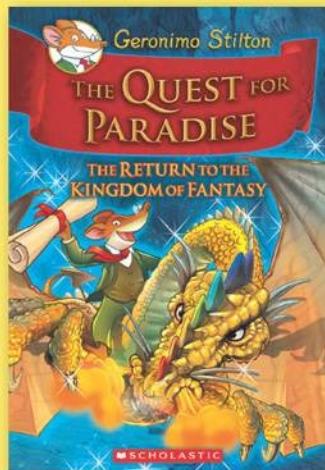
Thea Stilton and the
Great Tulip Heist



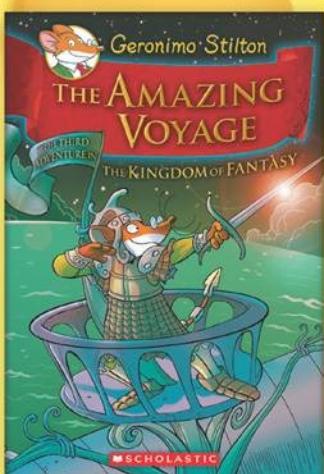
Be sure
to read all
my adventures
in the Kingdom
of Fantasy!



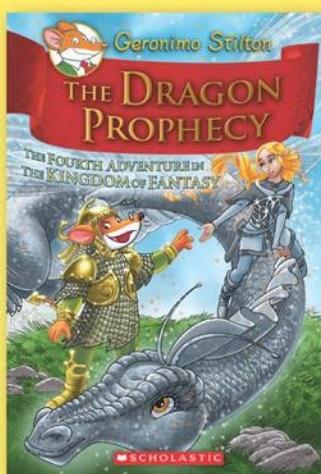
THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY



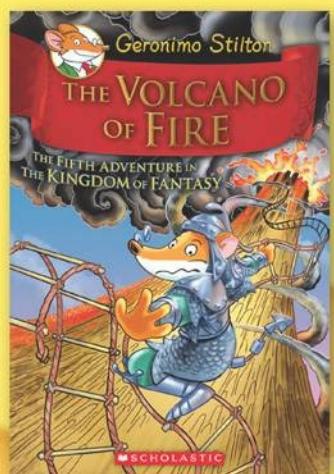
THE QUEST FOR
PARADISE:
THE RETURN TO THE
KINGDOM OF FANTASY



THE AMAZING
VOYAGE:
THE THIRD ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY



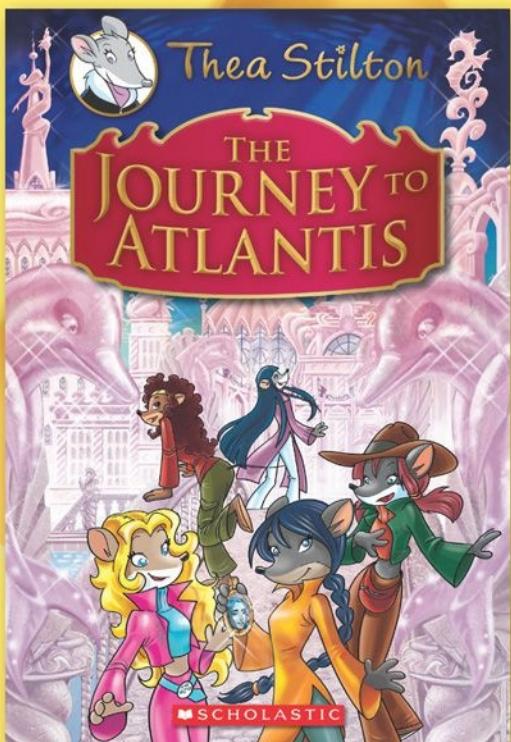
THE DRAGON
PROPHECY:
THE FOURTH ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY



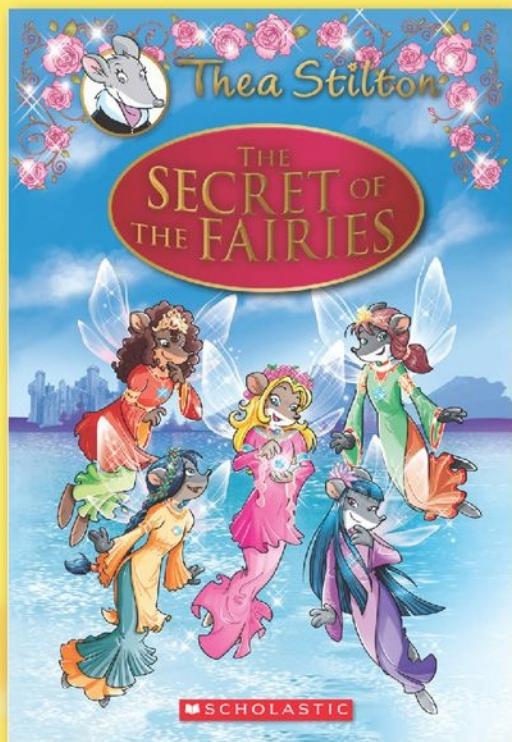
THE VOLCANO
OF FIRE:
THE FIFTH ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY



Check out
these very
special editions
featuring me
and the Thea
Sisters!



THE JOURNEY
TO ATLANTIS

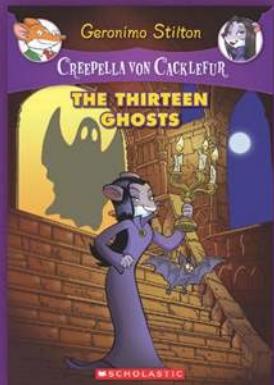


THE SECRET OF
THE FAIRIES

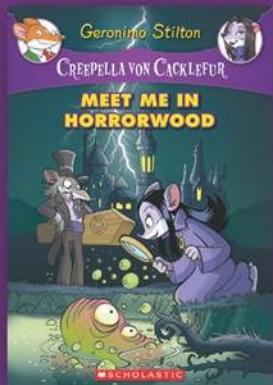


Meet CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR

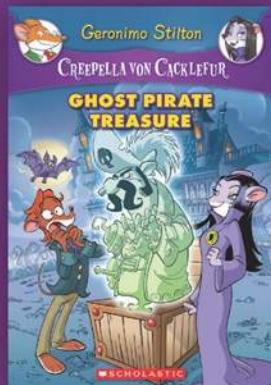
I, Geronimo Stilton, have a lot of mouse friends, but none as **spooky** as my friend **CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR!** She is an enchanting and **MYSTERIOUS** mouse with a pet bat named **Bitewing.** **YIKES!** I'm a real 'fraidy mouse, but even I think **CREEPELLA** and her family are **AWFULLY** fascinating. I can't wait for you to read all about **CREEPELLA** in these **fa-mouse-ly funny** and **spectacularly spooky** tales!



#1 The Thirteen
Ghosts



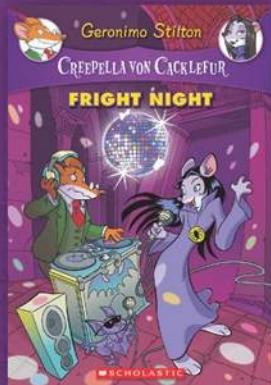
#2 Meet Me In
Horrorwood



#3 Ghost Pirate
Treasure



#4 Return of the
Vampire

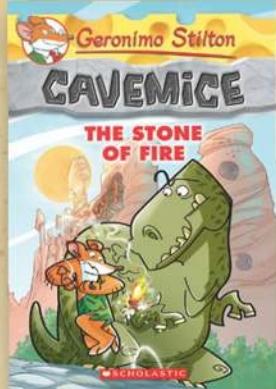


#5 Fright Night

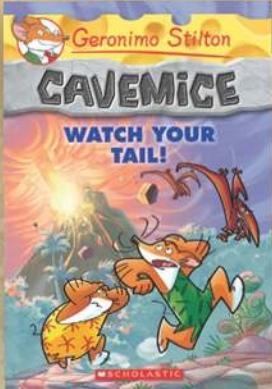


Meet **GERONIMO STILTONOOT**

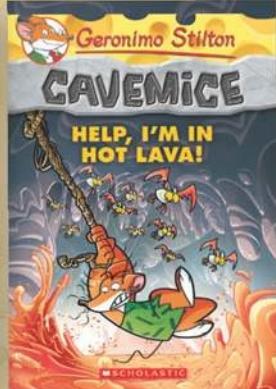
He is a cavemouse — Geronimo Stilton's ancient ancestor! He runs the stone newspaper in the prehistoric village of Old Mouse City. From dealing with dinosaurs to dodging meteorites, his life in the Stone Age is full of adventure!



#1 The Stone of Fire



#2 Watch Your Tail!



#3 Help, I'm in Hot Lava!

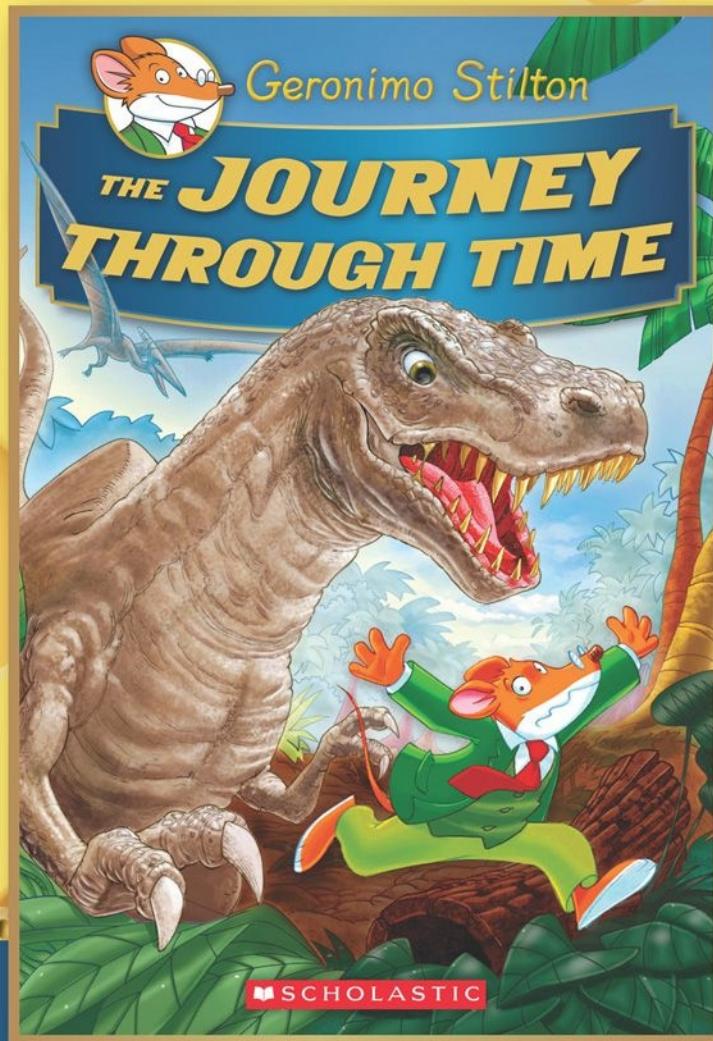


#4 The Fast and the Frozen





Join me and my friends on
a journey through time in
this very special edition!



THE JOURNEY
THROUGH TIME

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Born in New Mouse City, Mouse Island, **GERONIMO STILTON** is Rattus Emeritus of Mousomorphic Literature and of Neo-Ratonic Comparative Philosophy. For the past twenty years, he has been running *The Rodent's Gazette*, New Mouse City's most widely read daily newspaper.

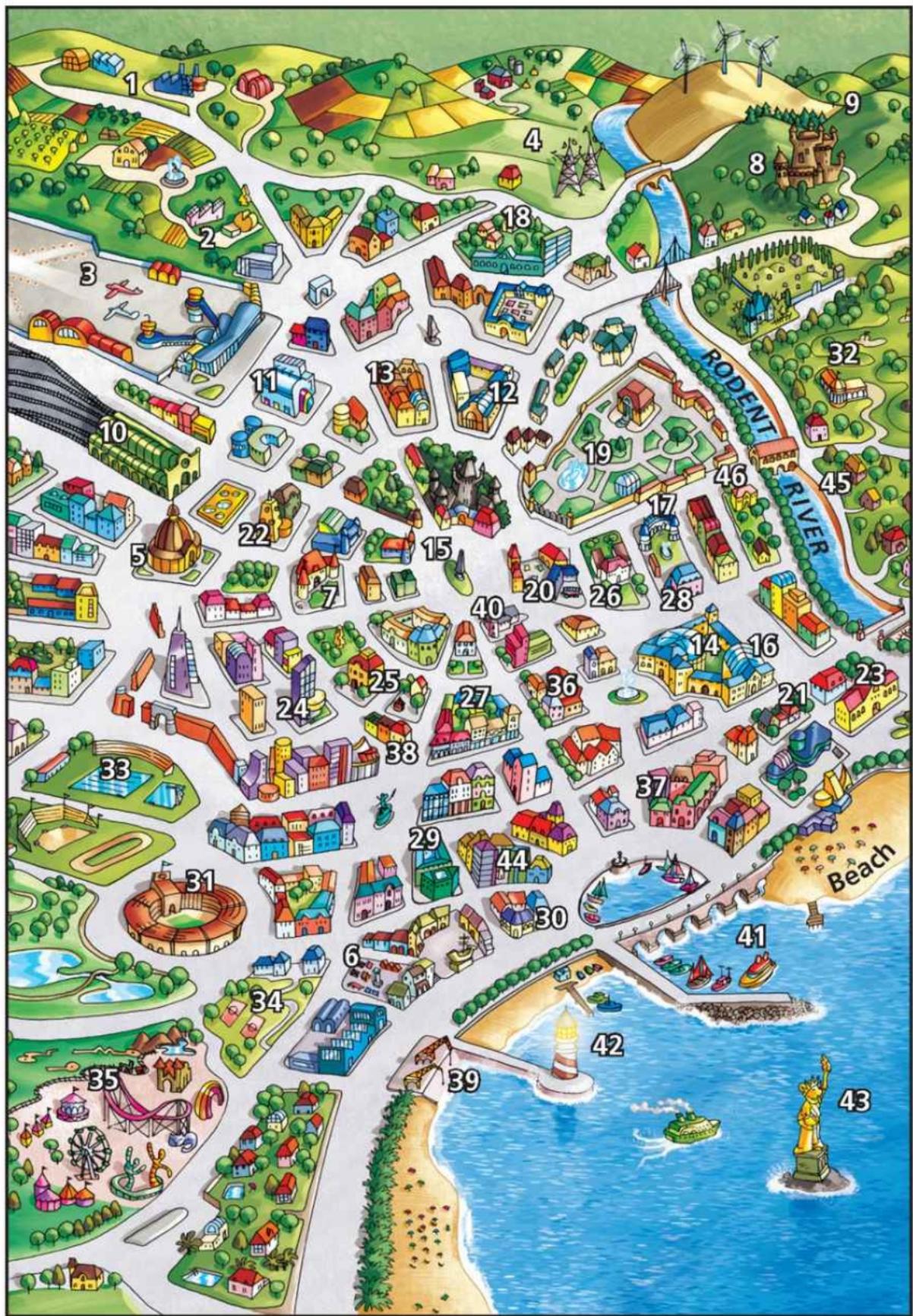
Stilton was awarded the Ratitzer Prize for his scoops on *The Curse of the Cheese Pyramid* and *The Search for Sunken Treasure*. He has also received the Andersen 2000 Prize for Personality of the Year. One of his bestsellers won the 2002 eBook Award for world's best ratlings' electronic book. His works have been published all over the globe.

In his spare time, Mr. Stilton collects antique cheese rinds and plays golf. But what he most enjoys is telling stories to his nephew Benjamin.



1. Main entrance
2. Printing presses (where the books and newspaper are printed)
3. Accounts department
4. Editorial room (where the editors, illustrators, and designers work)
5. Geronimo Stilton's office
6. Helicopter landing pad

*THE RODENT'S
GAZETTE*



Map of New Mouse City

1. Industrial Zone
2. Cheese Factories
3. Angorat International Airport
4. WRAT Radio and Television Station
5. Cheese Market
6. Fish Market
7. Town Hall
8. Snotnose Castle
9. The Seven Hills of Mouse Island
10. Mouse Central Station
11. Trade Center
12. Movie Theater
13. Gym
14. Catnegie Hall
15. Singing Stone Plaza
16. The Gouda Theater
17. Grand Hotel
18. Mouse General Hospital
19. Botanical Gardens
20. Cheap Junk for Less
(Trap's store)
21. Aunt Sweetfur and Benjamin's House
22. Mouseum of Modern Art
23. University and Library
24. *The Daily Rat*
25. *The Rodent's Gazette*
26. Trap's House
27. Fashion District
28. The Mouse House Restaurant
29. Environmental Protection Center
30. Harbor Office
31. Mousidon Square Garden
32. Golf Course
33. Swimming Pool
34. Tennis Courts
35. Curlyfur Island Amusement Park
36. Geronimo's House
37. Historic District
38. Public Library
39. Shipyard
40. Thea's House
41. New Mouse Harbor
42. Luna Lighthouse
43. The Statue of Liberty
44. Hercule Poirat's Office
45. Petunia Pretty Paws's House
46. Grandfather William's House

Brigand's Isle



Tomcat Island



Coral Reefs

This way
to the Mousific
Ocean



Stray
Cat
Harbor



Mousefort Beach

Furflung Island

This way to the Rodent Straits



Pirate Ship
of Cats

Cat's
Claw
Bay

Panther
Archipelago

Swissville

This way
to the
Ratlantic Ocean



Blue Dolphin
Bay

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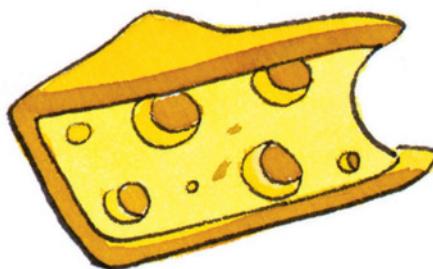
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Map of Mouse Island

1. Big Ice Lake	21. Lake Lakelake
2. Frozen Fur Peak	22. Lake Lakelakelake
3. Slipperyslopes Glacier	23. Cheddar Crag
4. Coldcreeps Peak	24. Cannycat Castle
5. Ratzikistan	25. Valley of the Giant
6. Transratania	Sequoia
7. Mount Vamp	26. Cheddar Springs
8. Roastedrat Volcano	27. Sulfurous Swamp
9. Brimstone Lake	28. Old Reliable Geyser
10. Poopedcat Pass	29. Vole Vale
11. Stinko Peak	30. Ravingrat Ravine
12. Dark Forest	31. Gnat Marshes
13. Vain Vampires Valley	32. Munster Highlands
14. Goose Bumps Gorge	33. Mousehara Desert
15. The Shadow Line Pass	34. Oasis of the
16. Penny Pincher Castle	Sweaty Camel
17. Nature Reserve Park	35. Cabbagehead Hill
18. Las Ratayas Marinas	36. Rattytrap Jungle
19. Fossil Forest	37. Rio Mosquito
20. Lake Lake	



Dear mouse friends,
Thanks for reading, and farewell
till the next book.
It'll be another whisker-licking-good
adventure, and that's a promise!



Geronimo Stilton



GERONIMO STILTON



THEA



TRAP



BENJAMIN

Who is Geronimo Stilton?

That's me! I run a newspaper, but my true passion is writing adventure stories. Here in New Mouse City, the capital of Mouse Island, my books are all bestsellers! My stories are funny, fa-mouse-ly funny. They are whisker-licking-good tales, and that's a promise!

A CHEESE-COLORED CAMPER

My grandfather William Shortpaws was back at *The Rodent's Gazette*, and he was determined to drive me up a clock! He wanted to publish a guide book to Ratzikistan, the coldest, darkest, most remote spot on all of Mouse Island. And he wanted me to write it! So he packed up his cheese-colored camper, and we were on our way. But as you know, dear reader, I HATE TRAVELING!



[www.scholastic.com/
geronimostilton](http://www.scholastic.com/geronimostilton)

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